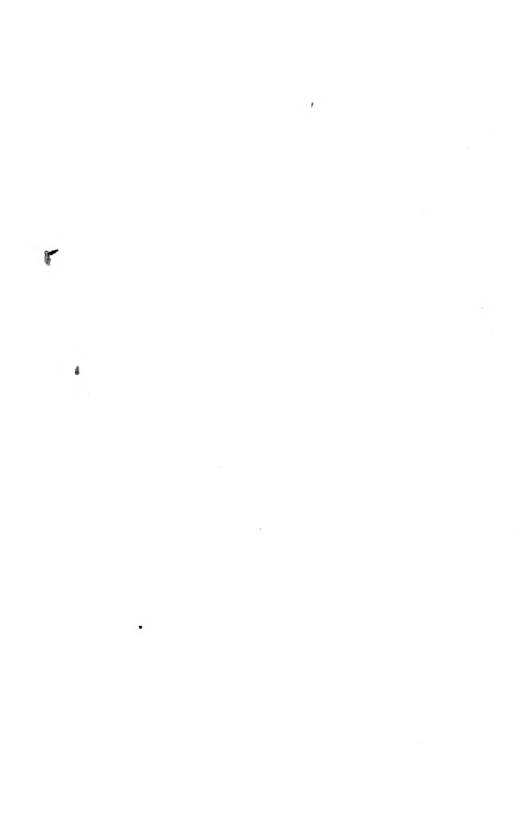




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C. VALERI CATULLI ATTIN

ANNOTAVIT, ILLUSTRAVIT, ANGLICE REDDIDIT

CAROLUS GRANT ALLEN, B.A.

COLL. MERTON. APUD OXON.

OLIM PORTIONISTA



LONDINI. MDCCCXCH. APUD DAVIDEM NUTT IN
VIA DICTA STRAND

The Attis of Caius Valerius Catullus

Translated into English Verse, with Dissertations

On the Myth of Attis, on the Origin of Tree-

Worship, and on the Galliambic Metre

By Grant Allen, B.A., formerly

Postmaster of Merton

College, Oxford



LONDON. MDCCCXCII. PUBLISHED BY DAVID NUTT
IN THE STRAND

TO
FRANKLIN T. RICHARDS,
SENIOR TUTOR OF TRINITY COLLEGE, OXFORD,

I Dedicate

THIS SLIGHT MEMORIAL
OF A LONG AND EVER UNBROKEN FRIENDSHIP.

INTRODUCTION.

I DON'T often "drop into poetry;" therefore, I suppose, I feel all the more keenly the necessity for apology and explanation on the occasion of this my first public appearance in the character of a versifier. I have a sufficient excuse, however, for translating the *Attis*. It is now nearly twenty years ago that I read Catullus's masterpiece with my class of students in an abortive little government college in Spanish Town, Jamaica. After the lads had mastered the poem from the purely linguistic and grammatical point of view, I noticed that they didn't appear to have the slightest conception of the literary merit and human interest of that marvellous outburst of impassioned song. In order,

if possible, to make them feel that this was poetry—and poetry of a very high order—I endeavoured, *crassa Minerva*, to bring out the chief points of the work in a metrical rhyming English version. My main object in my translation was to preserve as far as practicable the peculiarly orgiastic dithyrambic tone of the original Galliambics. On my return to England, a few years later, I showed my version to Mr. Robinson Ellis, the value of whose opinion on all matters affecting Catullian literature and criticism no one will dispute. Mr. Ellis was kind enough to praise my lines, and strongly urged me to publish them in some permanent form. This I desired to do, but other avocations interfered for several years. I put off publication mainly because I desired to accompany the translation with an Excursus on the Origin of Tree-Worship, about which I had formed certain novel opinions of a sort little likely to find favour with the school of anthropologists then most in fashion. The appearance,

a little later, of Mr. Herbert Spencer's *Principles of Sociology*, which first definitely set forth the theory of the origin of gods from the primitive ghost, made me reconsider in part my views as to the nature of tree-worship. Finally, Mr. Frazer's learned and conclusive treatise, *The Golden Bough*, compelled me to reopen the entire question after I had long considered it for ever settled. For henceforth whoever deals with any such questions has Mr. Frazer to reckon with. We may agree with him or we may differ from him, but we cannot afford to ignore him.

It is with the object of reconciling the apparently hostile views of these two great original thinkers that I have written the two Excursuses here printed, "On the Myth of Attis," and "On the Origin of Tree-Worship." When I first read *The Golden Bough*, I felt convinced that its author had hit upon a true explanation of many myths and religious practices which had hitherto baffled investigation. At the same time, my

faith in Mr. Spencer's masterly demonstration of the origin of the idea of gods from the primitive ghost theory remained unshaken. Thinking the matter over in my own mind, I saw after a while that my long unwritten views on the Origin of Tree-Worship formed the exact connecting link which was still missing between Mr. Frazer's ideas and Mr. Spencer's. I determined, therefore, to commit them to paper, and leave them to the judgment of competent critics. The main idea of my essays is thus briefly this—that while all gods were originally ghosts, sacred trees and tree-gods owe their sanctity to having grown in the first place on the tumulus or barrow of the deified ancestor.

I have prefixed to my translation the text of the original Latin, mainly for ease and convenience of reference. Here, I have for the most part followed Mr. Robinson Ellis's admirable edition, with a few trifling variations, though in line 18 I have had the hardihood to restore the reading *heræ* in place of *are*, on

metrical grounds which I have endeavoured to justify in the Third Excursus, "On the Galliambic Metre." It must be remembered that Mr. Ellis does not generally attempt to reconstruct conjecturally the original text of Catullus, but merely in the most conscientious spirit of textual criticism to reach by the comparative method the probable readings of the archetypal manuscript discovered at Verona about 1320, but long since lost. From this archetypal manuscript, all our existing copies are derived. It is perhaps allowable, however, for less serious students, to hazard now and again a pure guess as to the words Catullus actually wrote. Hence the attentive reader (if I am lucky enough to secure a specimen of that almost extinct race) will no doubt immediately perceive for himself that the translation does not always exactly correspond with the reading in the text. While anxious, as far as possible, to accept Mr. Ellis's authority—for which nobody could have a greater respect than myself—I felt at times that I failed to get

any satisfactory poetical meaning out of his final readings ; and in such cases, I have ventured, in all humility and with due deference, to adopt one of the less authoritative but more comprehensible variants. In line 43, for example, I have even restored in the text the final *m* of *trepidantem*, instead of the *trepidante* of the archetypal manuscript, because I feel quite sure that, no matter what the manuscript said, Catullus certainly made Sleep tremble, not Pasithea, who had no particular reason for trembling or otherwise conducting herself. In other cases, I have adopted in the text Mr. Ellis's readings, but have employed in the translation some more poetical alternative. For instance, while keeping in the Latin of line 9 the austere and explanatory *Typanum, tubam Cybelles*, which is too prosaic and stiff for poetical purposes, I have "treated resolution" by allowing myself in the translation the parenthetical and exclamatory *Typanum, tubam, Cybelle*, which may be far less scholarly, but is far more artistic. I have also

conceded to modern prejudice distinctive types for *i* and *j*, for *u* and *v* ; and I have assimilated the spelling to ordinary classical usage. Furthermore, in the English version, I have preferred the form *Cybebe* to *Cybelle* as more euphonious and less open to distracting modern associations. For all these divergences from the strict rules of textual criticism, I humbly beg pardon of my learned readers. As for line 5, it seems to me so hopelessly corrupt that we can't now even arrive at a plausible guess as to what Catullus really wrote. Fortunately, however, the context renders the drift of it perfectly clear, so that, though we don't know what Catullus *wrote*, we *do* know perfectly just about what he meant, which, after all, is a vast deal more important.

The *Attis* is, in my opinion, the greatest poem in the Latin language : its spirit is the profoundest, its tone the most modern. We get in it the finest flower of the Celtic genius, infiltrated by the mystic and mysterious charm of the Oriental imagination. No poem is worthier of the closest

reading ; no poem so great has received on the whole such scanty attention. As a work of art, it is supreme and well-nigh perfect ; as a specimen of a peculiar mode of thought and feeling, it deserves the deepest and most sympathetic study.

C. VALERI CATULLI

ATTIS.

*Super alta veclūs Attis celeri rate maria,
Phrygium ut nemus citato cupide pede
tetigit,*

*Adiitque opaca silvis redimita loca dææ,
Stimulatus ibi furenti rabie, vagus animis,
Devolvit ile acuto sibi pondere filicis.* 5

*Itaque ut relicta sensit sibi membra sine viro,
Etiam recente terræ sola sanguine maculans,
Niveis citata cepit manibus leve typanum
(Typanum, tubam Cybelles, tua, mater,
initia !),*

*Quatiensque terga tauri teneris cava digitis, 10
Canere hæc suis adorta est tremebunda comi-
tibus.*

“Agite,

A

*“ Agite, ite ad alta, Gallæ, Cybeles nemora
simul ;*

*Simul ite, Dindimenæ dominæ vaga pecora,
Alicna quæ petentes velut exules loca,
Sec̃lam meam executæ, duce me, mihi comites, 15
Rapidum salum tulistis truculentaque pelagi,
Et corpus evirastis Veneris nimio odio ;
Hilarate heræ citatis erroribus animum :
Mora tarda mente ccdat : simul ite, sequi-
mini*

*Phrygiam ad domum Cybelles, Phrygia ad 20
nemora deæ,*

*Ubi cymbalum sonat vox, ubi tympana re-
boant,*

*Tibicen ubi canit Phryx curvo grave calamo,
Ubi capita Mænades vi jaciunt hederigeræ,
Ubi sacra sancta acutis ululatibus agitant,
Ubi succit illa diuæ volitare vaga cohors ; 25
Quo nos decet citatis celerare tripudiis.”*

*Simul hæc comitibus Attis cecinit, notha
mulier,*

*Thiasus repente linguis trepidantibus ululat,
Leve*

*Leve tympanum remugit, cava cymbala re-
crepant,
Viridem citus adit Idam properante pede* 30
chorus.
*Furibunda simul, anhelans, vaga vadit, ani-
mam agens,
Comitata tympano Attis per opaca nemora
dux,
Vcluti juvenca vitans onus indomita jugi.
Rapidæ ducem sequuntur Gallæ properi-
pedem.*
Itaque, ut domum Cybelles tctigere lassulæ, 35
Nimio e labore somnum capiunt sine Cerere.
*Piger his labante langore oculos sopor
operit:*
Abit in quiete molli ravidus furor animi.
*Sed ubi oris aurei sol radiantibus oculis
Lustravit æthera album, sola dura, mare* 40
ferum,
Pepulitque noctis umbras vegetis sonipedibus,
*Ibi Somnus excitum Attin fugiens citus
abiit: .*
Trepidantem cum recepit dea Pasithea sinu.
Ita

Ita de quiete molli rapida sine rabie
Simul ipse pectore Attis sua facta recoluit, 45
Liquidaque mente vidit sine quicis ubique
foret,
Animo æfluante rursus reditum ad vada
tetulit.
Ibi maria vasta visens lacrumantibus oculis,
Patriam allocuta mæsta est ita voce miseriter.

"Patria mei creatrix, patria mea genetrix, 50
Ego quam miser relinquens, dominos ut
heri fugæ
Famuli solent, ad Idæ tetuli nemora pedem,
Ut apud nivem et ferarum gelida stabula
forem,
Et carum omnia adirem furibunda latibula,
Ubinam aut quibus locis te positam, patria, 55
reor?
Cupit ipsa pupula ad te sibi dirigere aciem,
Rabie fera carens dum breve tempus animus
est.
Egone a mea remota hæc ferar in nemora
domo?

Patria,

Patria, bonis, amicis, genitoribus abero ?
Abero foro, palæstra, stadio et gymnasiis ? 60
Miser, ah, miser, querendum est etiam atque
etiam, anime.

Quod enim genus figuræ est ego non quod
obierim ?

Ego mulier, ego adolescens, ego ephebus, ego
puer ;

Ego gymnasi fui flos, ego eram decus olci.
Mihi januæ frequentes, mihi limina tepida, 65
Mihi floridis corollis redimita domus erat,
Linquendum ubi esset orto mihi sole cubi-
culum.

Ego nunc decum ministra et Cybeles famula
ferar ?

Ego Mænas, ego mei pars, ego vir sterilis
cro ?

Ego viridis algida Idæ nive amicta loca 70
colam ?

Ego vitam agam sub altis Phrygiæ colu-
minibus,

Ubi cerva silvicultrix, ubi aper nemorivagus ?
Jam jam dolet quod egi, jam jamque pœnitet."

Roseis

*Roseis ut huic labellis sonitus citus abiit,
Geminas decorum ad aures nova nuntia 75
referens,*

*Ibi iuncta juga resolvens Cybele leonibus,
Lævumque pecoris hostem stimulans ita lo-
quitur.*

*"Agcdum," inquit, "age ferox, i, face ut
hunc furor agitet ;*

*Face uti furoris icū reditum in nemora
ferat,*

Mca libere nimis qui fugere imperia cupit. 80

*Age, cæde terga cauda, tua verbera patere,
Face cuncta mugienti fremitu loca retoncent,
Rutilam ferox torosa cervice quate jubam."*

*Ait hæc minax Cybelle, religatque juga
manu.*

*Ferus ipse sese adhortans rapidum incitat 85
animo ;*

*Vadit, fremit, refringit virgulta pede vago.
At ubi humida albicantis loca litoris adiit,
Tenerumque vidit Attin prope marmora
pelagi,*

Facit

*Facit impetum. Ille demens fugit in nemora
fera:*

Ibi semper omne vitæ spatium famula fuit. 93

*Dea, magna dea, Cybelle, dea domina
Dindimi,*

*Procul a mea tuus sit furor omnis, hera,
domo.*

Alios age incitatos, alios age rabidos.

THE ATTIS

OF CAIUS VALERIUS CATULLUS.

*Acrofs the roaring ocean, with heart and with
eye of flame,
To the Phrygian forest Attis in an eager frenzy
came :
And he leapt from his lofty vessel, and he stood in
the groves of pine
That circled round with shadows Cybebe's mystic
shrine :
And there in a frantic fury, as one whose sense
has flown,
He robbed himself of his manhood with an edge
of sharpened stone.
But as soon as he felt his body bereft of its manly
worth,
And saw the red blood trickle on the virgin soil
of earth,*

With

*With his blanched and womanish fingers a
timbrel he gan to smite
(A timbrel, a shawm, Cybele, thine, mother, O 10
thine the rite!),
And he beat the hollow ox-hide with a furious
feminine hand,
As he cried in trembling accents to the listening
Gallic band:—*

*“Arise, away, ye Gallæ! to Cybele’s lofty grove!
Together away, ye straylings of our Lady of
Dindyma’s drove!
Who have fought with me, like exiles, a far and 15
a foreign home:
Who have borne with me the buffets of the sea
and the fleeting foam:
Who have followed me, your leader, through the
savage storms of night:
Who have robbed your frames of manhood in
dainty love’s despite.
Make glad the soul of our Lady with the rapid
mazy dance.
Away with slothful loitering. Together arise, 20
advance*

To

*To Cybele's Phrygian forest, to the Goddess's
Phrygian home,
Where ring the clanging cymbals, where echoes
the bellowing drum,
Where slow the Phrygian minstrel on his reed
drones deep and dread,
Where the Mænad tosses wildly her ivy-encinctured
head,
Where the mystic rites of the goddess with piercing 25
shricks they greet,
Where our Lady's vagrant votaries together are
wont to meet—
Thither must we betake us with triply-twinkling
feet."*

*As thus to his eager comrades the unfixed Attis
cries,
In a sudden shriek the chorus with quivering
tongue replies :
The hollow timbrel bellows, the tinkling cymbals 30
ring.
Up Ida's slopes the Gallæ with feverish footsteps
spring.*

At

*At their head goes frantic, panting, as one whose
senses rove,
With his timbrel, fragile Attis, their guide
through the glimmering grove,
Like a heifer that shuns, unbroken, the yoke's
unaccustomed weight :
And with hurrying feet impetuous the Gallæ 35
follow straight.
So, when Cybele's precinct they reached in the
inmost wood,
With over-travail wearied they slept without
taste of food.
On their eyelids easy Slumber with gliding
languor crept,
And their spirit's fanatic ecstacy went from them
as they slept.
But when golden-visaged Phœbus with radiant 40
eyes again
Surveyed the fleecy æther, solid land, and roaring
main,
And with mettlesome chargers scattered the murky
shades of night,
Then Attis swift awakened, and Sleep fled fast
from his sight.*

(In

(In her bosom divine Pasithea received the trembling sprite.)

*So, aroused from gentle slumber and of feverish 45
frenzy freed,*

*As soon as Attis pondered in heart on his
passionate deed,*

*And with mind undimmed bethought him where
he stood and how unmanned,*

*Seething in soul he hurried back to the seaward
strand ;*

*And he gazed on the waste of waters, and the
tears brimmed full in his eye ;*

*And he thus bespake his fatherland with a plain- 50
tive, womanish cry—*

*“ O fatherland that bare me ! O fatherland
my home !*

*In an evil hour I left thee on the boundless deep
to roam.*

*As a slave who flees his master I fled from thy
nursing breast,*

*To dwell in the desolate forest upon Ida's rugged
crest :*

To

*To lurk in the snows of Ida, by the wild beast's 55
frozen lair :*

*To haunt the lonely thickets in the icy upper
air.*

*Oh, where dost thou lie, my fatherland, in the
ocean's broad expanse ?*

*For my very eyeball hungers upon thee to turn its
glance,*

*While my soul for a little moment is free from its
frenzied trance.*

*Shall I from my home be hurried to this grove so 60
far away ?*

*So far from my goods and my country, from my
kith and my kin shall I stray ?*

*From the games and the crowded market, from the
course and the wrestling-plain ?*

*Ah, hapless, hapless Attis, thou must mourn it
again and again.*

*For what form or fashion is there, what sex that
I have not known ?*

*I was a child and a stripling, a youth, and a man 65
full grown :*

*I was the flower of the athletes, the pride of the
wrestlers' zone.*

My

*My gates were thronged with comrades, my threshold
warm with feet ;*

*My home was fair encircled with flowery garlands
sweet,*

*When I rose from my couch at sunrise the smiling
day to greet.*

*Shall I be our Lady's bondmaid? a slave at
Cybele's hand?*

*Shall I be a sexless Maenad, a minion, a thing
unmanned?*

*Shall I dwell on the icy ridges under Ida's chilly
blast?*

*Shall I pass my days in the shadows that the
Phrygian summits cast,*

*With the stag that haunts the forest, with the
boar that roams the glade?*

*Even now my soul repents me: even now is my
fury slayed."*

*From the rosy lips of Attis such plaint forth
issuing flowed,*

*And straight the rebellious message rose up to the
Gods' abode.*

From

*From the brawny neck of her lions Cybebe loosed
the yoke,
And, goading on his fury, to the savage beast she
spoke :
“ Up, up ! ” she cried ; “ dash onward ! Drive 20
back with a panic fear,
Drive back to the lonely wilderneys the wretch who
lingers here !
Who dares to flee so lightly from the doom that I
impose !
Lash, lash thy side in anger with thine own im-
petuous blows !
Let the din of thy savage bellowing roar loud on
the startled plain,
And thick on thy tawny shoulders shake fierce thy 25
shaggy mane ! ”*

*So threatening spake Cybebe and loosed from
his neck the yoke ;
And the brute, himself inciting, with a roar
through the thicket broke :
And he lashed his side in anger, and he rushed to
the hoary main,*

Till

*Till he found the fragile Attis by the shore of the
watery plain :*

*Then he gave one bound. But Attis fled back to 90
the grove aghast.*

*There all the days of his lifetime as Cybebe's thrall
he passed.*

*Goddefs ! mighty Goddefs ! Cybebe ! who
rulest Dindyma's height,
Far from my home, O Lady, let thy maddening
wrath alight !
Upon others rain thy frenzy ! Upon others wreak
thy might !*

EXCURSUS I.

ON THE MYTH OF ATTIS.

THE *Attis* of Catullus is in one respect unique among the literary heirlooms which antiquity has bequeathed to us. Alone of Greek or Roman poems it preserves for us some tincture of that orgiastic spirit which strikes the keynote of Asiatic, and especially of Phrygian and Syrian, religion. By its aid, and by the aid of no other ancient document, we are able faintly to reinstate for ourselves the passionate mourning of Eastern maidens over Adonis dead, the wild rites of Thammuz,

“ Whose annual wound in Lebanon allured
The Syrian damsels to lament his fate
In amorous ditties all a summer's day,”

and that strange threnody in which, as Herodotus informs us, the Egyptians bewailed the untimely end of Maneros. The *Bacchæ* of Euripides, indeed, reaches at times to almost the same

height of dithyrambic abandonment; but then the Bacchæ lacks that peculiarly plaintive and sympathetic air which is characteristic both of the Attis and of the whole religious thought of the Nile and the Orontes. The creeds and myths of the entire region between the Libyan desert and the Euxine coast have for their main, one might almost say their sole, theme the death and resurrection of the dearly beloved man-god. Hence they display a singular depth of reality and earnestness in their passion, which raises them in some respects far above the common level of religious thought. And in his poem of *Attis*, Catullus, a Celt of Gallia Cisalpina, fired and inspired with all the perfervid fancy of the Celtic race, has enshrined for us nobly in immortal verse his own transcript of the weird Oriental dirges he had heard himself during his Asiatic wanderings. It is this specially orgiastic tone of Catullus's masterpiece which I have attempted to the best of my ability to preserve in the English version here presented to the public; and it is because I believe I have perhaps succeeded in catching this particular keynote of my author's work to some slight degree better than many previous translators, that I venture to add

another experiment to the already large number of English paraphrases.

Except for the very perfect way in which Catullus has drunk in the inner spirit and tone of the Syrian or Phrygian religions, he is not, one must fain confess, an important authority for the myth of Attis. On the contrary, the version of the story he gives us, being a purely poetical one, intended rather "to purify the soul by fear and pity" than to convey to us any distinct or historical idea of the nature of the legend, would hardly by itself enable us to form a rough conception of the chief points in the myth of Attis. It is only when we look away to other and more prosaic informants that we begin to understand the true bearings of the tale and its relation to others of like import elsewhere. From Hippolytus, Pausanias, Arnobius, and Diodorus we are able, however, to piece together the story in a fuller form, which, as Mr. Frazer has pointed out,¹ leaves no doubt on any candid and reasoning mind of its kinship with the other Oriental myths of Adonis, Osiris, Dionysus, and Lityerses. The able author of *The Golden Bough* has treated this point so fully indeed,

¹ *The Golden Bough*, vol. i. p. 296.

in his profound and epoch-making work, that I will not waste time by going over the same ground again here in full, but will simply refer the curious reader to Mr. Frazer's weighty and admirable discussion of the question under consideration.

What Adonis was to Syria, that was Attis to Phrygia. "Like Adonis," says Mr. Frazer, "he appears to have been a god of vegetation, and his death and resurrection were annually mourned and rejoiced over at a festival in spring." According to the most received account, Attis was a young man beloved by Cybele, the great mystic goddess of the Phrygian groves. Like his equivalent Adonis, he was killed by a wild boar, or, as a variant legend asserted, he mutilated himself under a pine-tree, and died from effusion of blood from the wound thus caused. This last version, as Mr. Frazer justly remarks, has a character of rudeness and savagery which seems to betoken a very remote antiquity; and furthermore, it has the merit for our present purpose of bringing into close connection with the hero or demi-god that peculiar property, the pine-tree, which, as we shall hereafter see, plays so prominent and so profoundly important a part

in the story of Attis. For after his death Attis is said to have been changed into a pine-tree. As we continue our investigation, I think we shall see reason gradually to conclude that this pine-tree is not only an essential part of the myth, but is even its very core and kernel. It is not Attis that makes the pine-tree; it is the pine-tree that makes the story of Attis.

“The ceremonies observed at his festival,” says Mr. Frazer (whom I follow implicitly here, having nothing better of my own—nor as good—to offer), “are not very fully known, but their general order appears to have been as follows:—At the spring equinox (22nd March) a pine-tree was cut in the woods and brought into the sanctuary of Cybele, where it was treated as a divinity. It was adorned with woollen bands and wreaths of violets, for violets were said to have sprung from the blood of Attis, as anemones from the blood of Adonis; and the effigy of a young man was attached to the middle of the tree. On the second day (23rd March) the chief ceremony seems to have been a blowing of trumpets. The third day (24th March) was known as the Day of Blood: the high priest drew blood from his arms and presented it as an

offering. It was perhaps on this day or night that the mourning for Attis took place over an effigy, which was afterwards solemnly buried. The fourth day (25th March) was the Festival of Joy (*Hilaria*), at which the resurrection of Attis was probably celebrated—at least the celebration of his resurrection seems to have followed closely upon that of his death. The Roman festival closed on the 27th of March with a procession to the brook Almo, in which the bullock-cart of the goddess, her image, and other sacred objects were bathed. But this bath of the goddess is known to have also formed part of her festival in her Asiatic home. On returning from the water the cart and oxen were strewn with fresh spring flowers.”¹

Now the full meaning of all this ceremonial, every portion of which has its parallels elsewhere, both in the rites of savage tribes and in the surviving superstitions of modern European peasants, can only be fully understood after reading what Mr. Frazer has to say on each of these points and its underlying reason; and I must once more refer readers for further particulars to his profoundly learned discussion of

¹ *The Golden Bough*, vol. i. p. 297.

the subject. But it will be advisable here just to mention that Mr. Frazer sees in the Phrygian devotee of Cybele one of those common wood-spirits, or gods of vegetation, who crop up here and there all the world over, and whose true importance in the history of religion he was the first (following in part in the steps of Mannhardt) to make clear to the minds of serious anthropologists.

Attis, then, Mr. Frazer believes, was originally a tree-spirit, and his character as such is plainly brought out by the part which the pine-tree plays in his legend and ritual. One story even represents him as a youth beloved by Cybele, and afterwards turned into a pine-tree; and this form of the legend, which Mr. Frazer treats as a mere late attempt at rationalisation of the story, seems to me to point back rather to an earlier and very bloody form of the worship, to which I shall more than once recur hereafter. In any case, as Mr. Frazer shows, the bringing in of the pine-tree from the wood, decked with violets and woollen bands, corresponds to the bringing in of the May-tree or Summer-tree in modern folk-custom; while the effigy which was attached to the pine in the Phrygian rite was probably

a duplicate representative of the tree-spirit of Attis. "At what point of the ceremony the violets and the effigy were attached to the tree is not said, but we should assume it to be done after the mimic death and burial of Attis. The fastening of his effigy to the tree would then be a representation of his coming to life again in tree-form, just as the placing of the shirt of the effigy of Death upon a tree" (in north-European folk-custom¹), "represents the revival of the spirit of vegetation in a new form. After being attached to the tree, the effigy was kept a year and then burned. We have seen that this was apparently sometimes done with the May-pole; and we shall see presently that the effigy of the corn-spirit, made at harvest, is often preserved till it is replaced by a new effigy at next year's harvest. The original intention of thus preserving the effigy for a year and then replacing it by a new one, was doubtless to maintain the spirit of vegetation in fresh and vigorous life. The bathing of the image of Cybele was probably a rain-charm, like the throwing of the effigies of Death and of Adonis into the water."² Thus

¹ See *The Golden Bough*, vol. i. p. 264.

² *Ibid*, vol. i. p. 298.

we see that Mr. Frazer identifies Attis at every point with the other familiar instances of tree-spirits or gods of vegetation.

Like tree-spirits in general, too, Attis was conceived as exercising power over the growth of corn, or would even appear to have been mystically identified with the corn itself. How this connection between trees or tree-spirits and corn or other food-crops arose in the gradual evolution of religions will be one of the questions we must attempt to answer in the second Excursus, "On the Origin of Tree-Worship." For the present, it will be enough to point out in brief that one of the epithets of Attis was "very fruitful;" that he was addressed as the "reaped yellow ear of corn;" and that the story of his sufferings, death, and resurrection was interpreted as symbolising the ripe grain wounded by the reaper, buried in the granary, and coming to life again when sown in the ground.¹

What was the origin of this Attis myth, or to speak more correctly, of this Attis ritual? Well, Mr. Frazer has shown that all the world over there existed, from very early times a class of divine priests or living man-gods, whose duty it

¹ Frazer, *ubi supra*, vol. i. p. 299.

was each year to die for their people and the harvest. These gods were regarded as specially connected with agriculture and the fruits of the earth ; and it was because vegetation requires to be annually renewed, and because it undergoes a yearly sleep during the leafless period of winter, that the divine priest-kings were called upon to sacrifice themselves once a year for the benefit of their subjects. I shall explain in the next *Excursus* what seems to me the origin and meaning of this strange form of faith and practice ; it must suffice here for the moment to show in rough outline how it immediately affects the myth of Attis.

Mr. Frazer hazards on this subject the very pregnant and brilliant guess that in these curious Attis ceremonies we have to deal with a late mitigation and modification of some such early self-immolating custom. In this, I think, he is perfectly right. It appears that both at Pessinus and at Rome the high priest of Cybele bore habitually the name of Attis. It is therefore a reasonable conjecture that he represented and carried on the succession of the original Attis, whom we may take to have been one of these annual self-immolating deities. Mr. Frazer

believes, indeed, that at the yearly festival the high priest actually played the part of the legendary Attis. On the Day of Blood, he bled himself from the arms: was not this an imitation of the self-inflicted death of Attis under the pine-tree?¹ Or rather, if we may free ourselves from the domination of the old and probably incorrect mythological idea, which sees in all these things a story of what was believed to have once happened, instead of a practice which was always happening, may we not regard this blood-letting as a mitigation of some older ritual in accordance with which the Attis for the current year had to offer himself up by self-immolation or self-mutilation to the mother of the gods? Professor Ramsay says definitely that in Phrygia "the representative of the god was probably slain each year by a cruel death, just as the god himself had died."² But indeed may we not rather conclude, after all we have learned from Mr. Frazer, that the so-called "representative of the god" *was* in very fact the god himself—the actual Attis who died each year of his own free

¹ Compare the *Oberammergau* and other Passion plays.

² In *Encyclopædia Britannica*, art. "Phrygia," vol. xviii, p. 853.

will for the crops and the harvest? In that case, I think, we may look upon the effigy on the pine-tree as a substitute for the real body itself which would once have been affixed to it; while I believe we may regard the drawing of blood from the priest's arms as a similar substitute for the genuine self-immolation of earlier Attises. "We know from Strabo," says Mr. Frazer, "that the priests of Pessinus were at one time potentates as well as priests; they may, therefore, have belonged to that class of divine kings or popes whose duty it was to die each year for their people and the world."

So far, I have for the most part implicitly followed Mr. Frazer's lead. He is a leader whom nobody need be ashamed to follow. When we come to consider the origin of all these beliefs, however, as well as that of the tree-worship or corn-worship which underlies them, I shall strike out to some extent a line of my own. But before proceeding to this central point of our subject, I should like to note in passing that the Attis of Catullus does not bear any very great resemblance in his principal lineaments, either to the Attis of the myth or to the Attis of the ritual. As Sir Theodore Martin rightly puts it, the Attis

of mythology is a Phrygian shepherd beloved by Cybele and slain on her account; the Attis of the poet is her votary merely, and the foolish victim of his own religious frenzy.¹ Indeed, I think Catullus envisaged his hero to himself as a Hellenic youth, who crosses the sea from Greece to Phrygia, and there emasculates himself in a fit of passing superstitious madness. Still, through all disguises, one catches here and there to the end some faint echoes of the older and more savage conception, perhaps borrowed by the Celtic poet from Greek sources, and half unconsciously incorporated by him in his vivid work without the slightest suspicion of their real meaning. Thus the key-note of the whole composition is the self-immolation of Attis—a self-immolation bitterly regretted afterwards, it is true, but still duly performed, as the myth demands, by the hero of the story. Then, again, is not the wail of the mutilated Attis itself a reminiscence of the mourning of the women and of Cybele, the mother of the gods, over the prostrate body of the self-slain deity? Nay, may not even Cybele herself, the great goddess, once have been the mere mother of the human victim?

¹ *The Poems of Catullus*, p. 253.

And have we not still the connection with the forest, the trees, wild nature generally, to which Mr. Robinson Ellis so pertinently calls attention?¹ Other little points worth notice, too, are such facts as that Attis effects his self-mutilation with a flint knife—the ancient stone instrument of early days which the conservatism of religion has preserved for so many ritualistic purposes in so many lands; the instrument which was employed for circumcision by the Jews, and for various sacrificial purposes by the Roman priests. Even the very phrase, *dominos ut herifuge famule solent*, it seems to me, may convey to us some dim and uncertain reminiscence of the idea, mentioned by Mr. Frazer, that the self-immolating king-god should be a fugitive slave by origin. Thus the Rex Nemorensis of the Arician Grove was always a runaway; and it is at least possible that Catullus's lines may enshrine some similar doctrine and practice with regard to the mysterious priest-king of Pessinus. But however this may be, it must suffice for the present to remember that Attis is essentially a tree-god, and that his rites are most intimately and inextricably bound up with the worship of a pine-tree.

¹ *A Commentary on Catullus*, p. 204.

EXCURSUS II.

ON THE ORIGIN OF TREE-WORSHIP.

FROM the myth of Attis itself, with its strange old-world implications, let us turn our attention next to the more general subject of plant and tree-worship, of which the special case of the Phrygian god would appear to be only a particular example.

It will be evident at once from what has gone before that I accept on the whole, without reservation of any kind, Mr. Frazer's main view as to the importance of tree-spirits and the soul of vegetation in early religions. But, then, I also accept as proved almost beyond the possibility of doubt Mr. Herbert Spencer's luminous theory of the origin of polytheism from ghost worship and ancestor-worship. Not only do I believe that Mr. Spencer has adequately made good his main thesis of the derivation of gods from heroic ancestors, but I have also received

considerable encouragement in my faith to this effect from Mr. William Simpson's brilliant and admirable paper on "The Worship of Death," a paper much less widely known among thinkers on this subject than it deserves to be. Mr. Simpson, who is the well-known special artist of the *Illustrated London News*, has been led by his direct observations in the many lands he has visited in the performance of his duties to form independently a theory identical in every essential respect with Mr. Herbert Spencer's. Examination of temples, or their equivalents, in endless lands, from China to Peru, has convinced him at last that in almost every case the temple begins as a tomb or shrine of a dead person, and the worship is primarily offered to the actual ghost of the man or woman interred within it. I cannot sufficiently commend to the attention of anthropologists, archæologists, and folklorists this able, original, and very philosophic pamphlet.

Now, between these two views—Mr. Spencer's and Mr. Frazer's—I am aware there would appear at first sight to be an immense discrepancy. I believe Mr. Frazer himself, in particular, would regard them as nothing short of absolutely irreconcilable. To judge from one pregnant passage

in *The Golden Bough* (vol. i. p. 253), Mr. Frazer would appear to hold that the earliest gods of mankind in the hunting and pastoral stage of society took the form of animals, and that in the agricultural stage, gods were envisaged rather as corn or fruit-trees, or assumed the shape of a human being representing the corn or fruit-spirit. I can find nowhere in any part of his epoch-making work a single phrase which would lead me to suppose he would willingly accept the theory of the affiliation of tree-gods and spirits generally upon the ghosts of dead ancestors. Nevertheless, I believe such an affiliation to be not only possible, but natural and provable. It is the object of the present Excursus, indeed, to show in brief outline that the tree-spirit and the corn-spirit, like most other deities, originate in the ghost of the deified ancestor.

Let us begin by examining and endeavouring to understand a few cases of tree-spirits in various mythologies. Virgil tells us in the Third *Æneid* how, on a certain occasion, Æneas was offering a sacrifice on a tumulus crowned with dogwood and myrtle bushes. He endeavoured to pluck up some of these by the roots, in order to cover the altar, as was cus-

tomary, with leaf-clad branches. As he did so, the first bush which he tore up astounded him by exuding drops of liquid blood, which trickled and fell upon the soil beneath. He tried again, and again the tree bled human gore. On the third trial, a groan was heard proceeding from the tumulus, and a voice assured Æneas that the barrow on which he stood covered the murdered remains of his friend Polydorus.

Now, in this typical and highly illustrative myth — no doubt an ancient and well-known story incorporated by Virgil in his great poem — we see that the tree which grows upon a barrow is itself regarded as the representative and embodiment of the dead man's soul, just as elsewhere the snake which glides from the tomb of Anchises is regarded as the embodied spirit of the hero, and just as the owls and bats which haunt sepulchral caves are often identified in all parts of the world with the souls of the departed.

Similar stories of bleeding or speaking trees or bushes occur abundantly elsewhere. "When the oak is being felled," says Aubrey, in his *Remaines of Gentilisme*, p. 247, "it gives a kind of shriekes and groanes that may be heard

a mile off, as if it were the genius of the oak lamenting. E. Wyld, Esqr., hath heard it severall times." Certain Indians, says Bastian, dare not cut a particular plant, because there comes out of it a red juice which they take for its blood. I myself remember hearing as a boy in Canada that wherever *Sanguinaria Canadensis*, the common American bloodroot, grew in the woods, an Indian had once been buried, and that the red drops of juice which exuded from the stem when one picked the flowers were the dead man's blood. In Samoa, says Mr. Turner,¹ the special abode of Tuifiti, King of Fiji, was a grove of large and durable afzelia trees. "No one dared to cut that timber. A story is told of a party from Upolu who once attempted it, and the consequence was that blood flowed from the tree, and that the sacrilegious strangers all took ill and died." Till 1855, says Mannhardt, there was a sacred larch tree at Nauders in the Tyrol, which was thought to bleed whenever it was cut. In some of these cases, it is true, we do not know that the trees grew on tumuli, but this point is specially noticed about Polydorus's dogwood, and is probably implied in the Samoan

¹ Turner's *Samoa*, p. 63.

case, as I gather from the title given to the spirit as King of Fiji.

In other instances, however, this doubt does not exist; we are expressly told it is the souls of the dead which are believed to animate the bleeding or speaking trees. "The Dieyerie tribe of South Australia," says Mr. Frazer, "regard as very sacred certain trees which are supposed to be their fathers transformed; hence they will not cut the trees down, and protest against settlers doing so." Some of the Philippine Islanders believe that the souls of their forefathers are in certain trees, which they therefore spare. If obliged to fell one of these trees they excuse themselves by saying that it was the priest who made them fell it.

In an Annamite story an old fisherman makes an incision in the trunk of a tree which has drifted ashore; but blood flows from the cut, and it appears that an empress with her three daughters, who had been cast into the sea, are embodied in the tree.¹

Again, we must remember that most early worship is offered directly to the spirits of ancestors in the expectation of definite benefits to

¹ *The Golden Bough*, vol. i. p. 62.

be derived from their aid. In New Guinea, for example, where religion has hardly progressed at all beyond the most primitive stage of direct ancestor-worship, Mr. Chalmers tells us "when the natives begin planting, they first take a bunch of bananas and sugar-cane, and go to the centre of the plantation and call over the names of the dead belonging to their family, adding, 'There is your food, your bananas and sugar-cane; let our food grow well and let it be plentiful. If it does not grow well and plentifully you all will be full of shame, and so shall we.'" ¹

Similarly in Tana, one of the New Hebrides, where the stage of religious culture is about the same, Mr. Turner tells us, "the general name for God seemed to be *Aremha*; that means 'a dead man,' and hints alike at the origin and nature of their religious worship. The spirits of their departed ancestors were among their gods. Those who reached an advanced age were after death deified, addressed by name, and prayed to on various occasions. They were supposed specially to preside over the growth of the yams and the different fruit trees. The first fruits were presented to them; and in doing this, they

¹ Chalmers: *Work and Adventure in New Guinea*, p. 85.

laid a little of the fruit on some stone or shelving branch of the tree, or still more temporary altar of a few rough sticks from the bush, lashed together with strips of bark, in the form of a table with its four feet stuck in the ground. All being quiet, the chief who acted as high priest, prayed aloud thus: 'Compassionate Father. Here is some food for you; eat it. Be kind to us on account of it.' And instead of Amen all united in a shout."

Abundant other evidence could be forthcoming, were it necessary, to show that the ancestral spirits are regarded by the most primitive types of men as causing the earth to bring forth fruit in due season. But I hardly think further formal proof of this proposition necessary. It is familiar to all those who have studied anthropological literature, and comes out abundantly in the works of Herbert Spencer, Tylor, and Frazer. Later on, as the ancestral ghost develops, by slow degrees, into the tribal god, these functions of producing and guarding the crops are naturally transferred to the greater deities.

But how did the ancestral ghosts acquire in the first instance this peculiar power of causing growth in vegetation? The explanation, it seems

to me, though crude and barbaric, is a very simple and natural one. In the first place, in many of the earlier and more native forms of sepulture, the dead are buried under a tumulus or barrow. Such tumuli, of course, go back in time to a remote antiquity. Now, many circumstances would make vegetation upon the turf of the barrows exceptionally luxuriant. In the first place, the soil there has been largely piled up and laboured; it consists for the most part of an accumulation of deep vegetable mould, gathered together from all the surrounding surface; and at an age when cultivation was wholly unknown—for tumuli, we have reason to know from the example of Ohio, began in the hunting stage of humanity—the burial mound would be almost certainly conspicuous, from this cause alone, for its exceptional greenness. In the second place, again, the body within would add to its fertility, the more so as a great chief was seldom committed to the tomb alone, but was usually accompanied to the grave, whose megalithic stone chamber was to serve as his future palace, by his slaves, his wives, and his other belongings. In the third place, too, animals would be slaughtered, and feasts would take

place at the newly made barrow. The blood of the victims on such occasions is habitually poured out on the grave, or on the surface of the altar-stone; offerings of meat, of fruit, of milk, of oil, are made there in abundance by trembling worshippers. These offerings would act, of course, as rich manures, and would encourage on the barrows an unusual wealth and luxuriance of vegetation. But primitive man knows nothing of the nature and action of manure. To him, the fact that grass grew greener and bushes spread faster on the tumulus of the dead would almost inevitably appear as an effect immediately due to the supernatural power of the ghost or spirit who dwelt within it. In all probability, the savage would envisage to himself the actual herbs and shrubs which so sprang upon the tumulus as the direct embodiment of the soul of his ancestor, or his departed chieftain.

Now, it could hardly be expected that any direct evidence of so abstruse a point as this would be forthcoming from books or the accounts of travellers. Yet, fortunately, however, I have been lucky enough to hit in an unexpected place upon one curious little bit of actual confirmation of this *a priori* suggestion. In his

excellent work on *Nether Lochaber*, the Rev. Alexander Stewart, of Ballachulish, quotes and translates a Gaelic MS. poem, collected by Mr. Macdonald, the minister of the parish of Fortingall, in Perthshire, one stanza of which runs as follows :—

“And ever he saw that his maidens paid
 To the fairies their due on the *Fairy Knowe*,
 Till the emerald sward was under the tread
 As velvet soft and all aglow
 With wild flowers, such as fairies cull,
 Weaving their garlands and wreaths for the dance
 when the moon is full !”

Upon this suggestive verse Mr. Stewart makes a curious and important comment.

“The allusion to paying—

‘The fairies their due on the fairy knowe,’

has reference to the custom, common enough on the western mainland and in some of the Hebrides some fifty years ago, and not altogether unknown perhaps even at the present day, of each maiden’s pouring from her *cumanbleoghain*, or milking-pail, evening and morning, on the fairy knowe, a little of the new-drawn milk from the cow, by way of propitiating the favour of the good people, and

as a tribute the wisest, it was deemed, and most acceptable that could be rendered, and sooner or later sure to be repaid a thousand-fold. The consequence was that these fairy knolls were clothed with a richer and more beautiful verdure than any other spot, howe or knowe, in the country, and the lacteal riches imbibed by the soil through this custom is even now visible in the vivid emerald green of a *shian* or fairy knoll whenever it is pointed out to you. This custom of pouring lacteal libations to the fairies on a particular spot deemed sacred to them, was known and practised at some of the summer shielings in Lochaber within the memory of the people now living.”¹

Fully to appreciate the importance of this evidence we must remember that in almost every case, all over Britain, the “fairy knowe” is a chambered barrow, and that the fairies who emerge from it are the last fading relics in popular memory of the ghosts of stone age chiefs and chieftainesses. This idea, which I long ago put forward in an article in the *Cornhill Magazine*, entitled, “Who are the Fairies?” has been proved to demonstration by Mr. Joseph Jacobs

¹ Rev. A. Stewart, *Nether Lochaber*, pp. 20, 21.

in the notes on the story of Childe Roland in his valuable collection of *English Fairy Tales*.

There is yet another way, however, in which the idea of special fertility must become necessarily connected in the savage mind with the graves of his ancestors. For we must remember that early worship almost invariably takes the form of offerings in kind at the tombs of dead chiefs or other revered persons. On this subject the Rev. Duff Macdonald, of Blantyre, in Central Africa (one of the ablest and most unprejudiced of missionary observers), says very significantly: "The ordinary offerings to the gods were just the ordinary food of the people.¹ The spirit of the deceased man is called Mulungu, and all the prayers and offerings of the living are presented to such spirits of the dead. It is here that we find the great centre of native religion. The spirits of the dead are the gods of the living. It is the great tree at the verandah of the dead man's house that is their temple, and if no tree grow here they erect a little shade, and there perform their simple rites. If this spot become too public the offerings may be defiled, and the sanctuary will be removed to some

¹ *Africana*, vol. i. p. 89.

carefully selected spot under some beautiful tree." In this we get some first hint of the origin of tree-worship.

In another place again Mr. Macdonald says, "After burial, the women come forward with the offerings of food, and place them at the head of the grave. Dishes in which the food was brought are left behind."

Now the ordinary food of the living would of course include grains, seeds, such fruits as bananas, plantains, or melons, and many other vegetable objects. Mr. Macdonald adds the significant note : "It is not considered necessary that these offerings be taken away by the spirits. It is sufficient that they are placed there, that the spirits may come and lick them."¹ He further mentions that on these same graves fowls may be offered by cutting the throat, and making the blood flow down. "When the fowl is killed," says he, "they simply lay it down at the prayer-tree." A goat may be offered in the same way, or milk may be poured out at the foot of the sacred banyan. What is the implication? Why, naturally, seeds placed in newly turned soil over a dead body, and richly manured

¹ *Africana*, vol. i. p. 95.

with constant supplies of blood and milk, would germinate freely and produce unusually fine crops of grain or fruit. Is it suggesting too much to hint that, in this almost universal rite, we may even see the ultimate origin of cultivation? Primitive man, careless of the future as he is, would scarcely be likely deliberately to retain seeds from one year to the next for the purpose of sowing them. It is his habit rather to eat and destroy with lavish prodigality whatever he possesses in the pure recklessness of the moment. Something must first show him that seeds produce an increase before he can think of keeping them and deliberately planting them.

It has usually been held, to be sure, that cultivation must have taken its rise from the accident of chance seeds being scattered about in the neighbourhood of the hut or of the domestic manure-heap—the barbaric kitchen midden. This may be so, of course; but it seems to me at least equally probable that cultivation should have begun through the offerings of grains and fruits and seeds at the graves or barrows of departed ancestors. Certainly we see that fruits and seeds are constantly so offered by existing savages. We know that they are

deposited under conditions most favourable to their growth and productivity. And we can hardly doubt that the luxuriance of the vegetation so produced would greatly strike the mind of the early savage, and would be implicitly assigned to the productive power of his dead ancestors. I shall show in the sequel that the presence of an informing ghost or spirit of vegetation is even considered essential to the growth of crops by existing savages, and that human victims are slain by them for the mere purpose of providing such in-dwelling deities. The ghost in fact plays in the ideas of early man the same part that guano and phosphates play to-day in the ideas of the educated scientific farmer.

Indeed early men, in the first stage of religion, attribute almost all good luck of whatever sort to the spirits of their dead, and especially of their fathers. "If they pray for a successful hunting expedition," says Mr. Macdonald, "and return laden with venison or ivory, they know that it is their old relative that has done it, and they give him a thank-offering. If the hunting party get nothing, they may say, 'The spirit has been sulky with us,' and refuse the thank-offering."¹

¹ *Africana*, vol. i. p. 61.

Nor is this all ; I will even venture to go one step further. Is it not at least possible that in the minds of early men the fruitfulness of the sown crop may seem to depend upon the presence beneath the soil of the deified ancestor ? I do not mean physically, as manure, for that idea is, of course, quite beyond the savage, but magically and supernaturally, as ghost and spirit. At first sight, to be sure, this seems a somewhat large and uncertain postulate. But if we reflect upon the nature of the evidence collected by Mr. Frazer, we shall see, I think, that the transition is a sufficiently simple and natural one. Primitive man may well have begun by scattering seeds as offerings on the graves of his relations. If these seeds germinated and grew successfully, as they would be pretty certain to do, he would at once, as if by instinct, accept the increase as the immediate gift of the dead ancestor. For he knows nothing beforehand about the nature of seeds or the laws of their germination. He doesn't even know, to start with, that seeds are necessary for the production of food-plants. From this first step, however, it would be but a slight advance deliberately to produce and bury a god for the express purpose of fertilis-

ing a sown crop. That gods were so produced, slain, and buried in fields, to ensure fertility, we know now for certain. "The Kandhs," says Sir William Hunter,¹ "have many deities—race gods, tribe gods, family gods, and a multitude of malignant spirits—each one of whom must be appeased with blood. But their great divinity is the earth-god, who represents the productive energy of nature. Twice each year, at sowing time and at harvest, and in all special seasons of distress, the earth-god required a human sacrifice. The duty of providing the victims rested with the lower race of outcasts attached to the Kandh village. Bráhmans and Kandhs were the only two classes exempted from being sacrificed; and an ancient rule ordained that the offering must be bought with a price. Men of the lower race, attached to the villages, kidnapped victims from the plains; and it was a mark of respectability for a Kandh hamlet to keep a small stock in reserve, as they said, 'to meet sudden demands for atonement.' The victim, on being brought to the hamlet, was welcomed at every threshold, daintily fed, and kindly treated, till the fatal day arrived. He was then solemnly sacrificed

¹ *Imperial Gazetteer of India*, vol. vii. p. 207.

to the earth-god; the Kandhs shouting in his dying ear, 'We bought you with a price; no sin rests with us.' His flesh and blood were distributed among the village lands, a fragment being solemnly buried in each field in the newly turned furrows."

This passage is sufficiently striking in itself as evidence for our purpose; but Mr. Frazer has further shown good grounds for believing that the meriah, or victim selected for this purpose, was not merely "daintily fed and kindly treated," but was also regarded by the Kandhs themselves in the light of a god or divine personage. Indeed, Kandhs in distress often sold their own children for victims, "considering the beatification of their souls certain, and their death for the benefit of mankind the most honourable possible." "The victims," says Mr. Frazer, "being regarded as consecrated beings, were treated with extreme affection mingled with deference, and were welcomed wherever they went. A meriah youth, on attaining maturity, was generally given a wife who was herself usually a meriah or victim, and with her he received a portion of land and farm stock. . . . The periodical sacrifices were generally arranged

by tribes and divisions of tribes, so that each head of a family was enabled once a year to procure a shred of flesh for his fields, generally about the time when his chief crop was laid down.”¹

Still more striking is the account of the way in which bits of the body were disposed of after the sacrifice. “Flesh cut from the victim was instantly taken home by the persons who had been deputed by each village to bring it. To secure its rapid arrival it was sometimes forwarded by relays of men, and conveyed with postal fleetness fifty or sixty miles. In each village, all who stayed at home fasted rigidly until the flesh arrived. The bearer deposited it in the place of public assembly, where it was received by the priest and the heads of families. The priest divided it into two portions, one of which he offered to the earth-goddess by burying it in a hole in the ground, with his back turned, and without looking; then each man added a little earth to bury it, and the priest poured water on the spot from a full gourd.” (Notice here the simulation of burial, the formation of

¹ Frazer, *ubi supra*, vol. i. p. 385, quoting Macpherson, *Memorials of Service in India*, p. 115.

a tumulus, and the pouring of libations.) "The other portion of flesh he divided into as many shares as there were heads of houses present. Each head of a house rolled his shred of flesh in leaves and buried it in his favourite field, placing it in the earth behind his back, and without looking."¹ The remainder of the body—head, bones, and bowels—was afterwards burned on a funeral pile. The ashes were scattered over the fields, laid as paste over the houses and granaries, or mixed with the new corn to preserve it from insects. Here we would seem to have the superposition of a custom derived from cremation on a still earlier rite derived from burial and the formation of the barrow.

Of all these ceremonies, Mr. Frazer rightly remarks that they cannot be explained as merely parts of a propitiatory sacrifice. The burial of the flesh by each householder in his own fields implies that to the body of the meriah there was rather ascribed "a direct or intrinsic power of making the crops to grow." In other words, the flesh and ashes of the victim were believed to be endowed with a magical or physical power of fertilising the land. Again, intrinsic super-

¹ *The Golden Bough*, vol. i. p. 385.

natural power as an attribute of the meriah appears in the sovereign virtue believed to reside in anything that came from his person, as his hair or spittle. The ascription of such power to the meriah indicates that he was much more than a mere man sacrificed to propitiate an angry deity. Once more, the extreme reverence paid him would point to the same conclusion. Major Campbell speaks of the meriah as "being regarded as something more than mortal;" and Major Macpherson says that "a species of reverence which it is not easy to distinguish from adoration is paid to him." In short, by common consent of our authorities, the meriah appears to have been regarded as himself divine.

To a certain extent, then, I would venture to differ, with all deference and humility, as of a scholar towards his master, from Mr. Frazer, in the explanation which he gives of this and sundry kindred ceremonies. To him the human god, who is so frequently sacrificed for the benefit of the crops, is envisaged as primarily the embodiment of vegetation: I would make bold to suggest, on the contrary, that the corn or other crop is rather itself regarded as the embodiment or ghost of the divine personage.

Here are some more very striking cases that look that way, extracted once more from Mr. Frazer's vast repertory:—"A West African queen used to sacrifice a man and woman in the month of March. They were killed with spades and hoes, and their bodies buried in the middle of a field which had just been tilled. At Lagos, in Guinea, it was the custom annually to impale a young girl alive, soon after the spring equinox, in order to secure good crops. Along with her were sacrificed sheep and goats, which with yams, heads of maize, and plantains, were hung on stakes on each side of her. The victims were bred up for the purpose in the king's seraglio, and their minds had been so powerfully wrought upon by the fetish men that they went cheerfully to their fate. A similar sacrifice is still annually offered at Benin, Guinea. The Marimos, a Bechuana tribe, sacrifice a human being for the crops. The victim chosen is generally a short stout man. He is seized by violence, or intoxicated, and taken to the fields, where he is killed amongst the wheat to serve as 'seed' (so they phrase it). After his blood has coagulated in the sun, it is burned along with the frontal bone, the flesh attached to it, and the

brain; the ashes are then scattered over the ground to fertilise it. The rest of the body is eaten.”¹

Now it is true that in any case the identification of ghost and crop is very complete, for, as Mr. Frazer remarks, the Mexicans killed young victims for the young corn and old ones for the ripe corn. The Marimos thus sacrificed as “seed” a short fat man, the shortness of his stature corresponding to that of the young corn, his fatness to the condition which it is desired that the crops may attain. Again, says the same high authority, the identification of the victim with the corn comes out in the African custom of killing him with spades and hoes, and the Mexican custom of grinding him like corn between two stones. Still the point which I wish here particularly to suggest as important is, that cultivation may have begun on the actual tumuli of the dead, and that the annual god who was sacrificed for the fertility of the crops may have been, as it were, a deliberately designed and artificially produced deity, who replaced the ancestral spirit of early ages. Early man said to himself, “Food-plants grew best where they

¹ *The Golden Bough*, vol. i. p. 383.

grow on the grave of a divine chieftain: let us make such a grave in every field, and the spirit we put in it will ensure fertility." Just as cultivation itself is a substitution of artificial for natural growth, so the annual slain god is, I believe, an artificial substitute for the natural dead chieftain in his sacrificial barrow.

Mr. Gomme's recent work on *Ethnology in Folk-lore* contains some interesting facts in the same direction. The festival of the village goddess in Southern India, including Berar and Mysore, is signalised by rites which recall in many respects the sacrifice of the Kandhs, though here, as so often happens, an animal has been substituted for the human victim of primitive antiquity. This festival has always been under the management of the Pariahs, who act as sacrificial priests—a significant fact, which proves the rites to belong to an early stratum of aboriginal religion. The high-priest, known as the Potraj, was armed, according to Sir William Elliot, with a long whip. A sacred buffalo, the representative of the original human victim, was turned loose when a calf, and allowed to feed and roam at will about the village. On the second day of the feast, this animal was thrown

down before an unshapely stone, stained red with vermilion; its head was struck off by a single blow, and its foot was placed in its mouth in front of the altar. Around were laid vessels containing various cereals, while hard by stood a heap of mixed grains, with a drill-plough in the centre. The carcase was then cut up into small pieces, and each cultivator received a portion to bury in his own fields. Other ceremonies followed, immaterial, so far as I can see, to our present inquiry; but, on the fifth day, the heap of grain deposited beforehand was divided among all the cultivators, to be buried by each one in his field, together with the bit of sacred flesh.¹ In all this we cannot fail to see a ceremony essentially identical with the sacrifice of the meriah, except that an animal god or ghost has here been substituted for the earlier human one.

More interesting still is the curious fact that Mr. Gomme has traced survivals of the self-same practice in England itself, a point which shows that the custom of making these artificial protective gods of vegetation must have been fairly world-wide. At Holne in Devonshire, a village

¹ Gomme, *Ethnology in Folk-lore*, pp. 22-25.

on the slopes of Dartmoor, is a field of two acres, the property of the parish, and known as the Ploy-Field. In the centre stands an ancient granite pillar or menhir. On May morning, before breakfast, the young men of the village used to assemble at this spot and sacrifice a lamb, for pieces of whose body they afterwards struggled, attributing to them supernatural powers.¹

As bearing once more on the supposed connection between ghosts and crops, which we shall presently see resolves itself later on into a connection between trees and crops, we might bring up the curious ceremony of the gardens of Adonis, which would seem to be a survival of the same idea that vegetation springs directly from the body of the divine person. The death of the Syrian god was annually lamented with bitter wailing by the women of the country. Images of Adonis, dressed to resemble corpses, and, no doubt, replacing the actual corpse of the original annual Adonis victim, as the Attis effigies replaced the original slain Attis, were carried out to burial, and then thrown into the sea or into springs of water. What is more

¹ Gomme, *Ethnology in Folk-lore*, p. 32.

noteworthy, however, is the fact that baskets or pots were filled with earth in which wheat, barley, lettuces, and various flowers—presumably anemones among the number—were sown and tended for eight days, chiefly by women. Fostered by the sun's heat the plants shot up rapidly, but, having no depth of root, withered as rapidly away, and at the end of eight days were carried out with the images of the dead Adonis, and flung with them into the sea or into springs. We do not know whether these gardens were actually grown on the top of the effigies, but this would seem probable, says Mr. Frazer, from analogies elsewhere; for in Sicily the women, at the approach of Easter, sow wheat, lentils, and canary seed in plates, which are kept in the dark, and watered every second day. The plants shoot up quickly. The stalks are then tied together with red ribbons, and the plates containing them are placed on the sepulchres, which with effigies of the dead Christ are made up in Roman Catholic and Greek Churches on Good Friday. In both these cases the plants would seem to be envisaged as springing from the actual body of the dead god. Indeed, Eustathius speaks of the gardens of

Adonis as being placed on the grave of the hero.¹

Very similar is the nature of the evidence derived from the myth of Osiris. And in this respect it is well to remember that more than one competent Egyptologist has of late regarded Osiris as an early king, the founder of the dynasty of Hor in Upper Egypt. "I have myself no doubt whatever," says Mr. Loftie, "that the names of Osiris and Horus are those of ancient rulers. I think that, long before authentic history begins, Asar and Aset his wife reigned in Egypt, probably in that wide valley of the Upper Nile which is now the site of Girgeh and Berbé. Their son was Hor or Horus, the first king of Upper and Lower Egypt; and the 'Hor seshoo,' the successors of Horus, are not obscurely mentioned by later chroniclers. I know that this view is not shared by all students of the subject, and much learning and ingenuity have been spent to prove that Asar and Aset, and Hor, and Ptah, and Anep, are representatives of the powers of nature; that they do not point to ancient princes but to ancient principles; and that Horus and his successors are gods and

¹ *The Golden Bough*, vol. i. p. 295.

were never men. But in the oldest inscriptions we find none of that mysticism which is shown in the sculptures from the time of the eighteenth dynasty down to the Ptolemies and the Roman emperors.”¹ Now, “in one of the chambers dedicated to Osiris, in the great temple of Isis at Philæ, the dead body of Osiris is represented with stalks of corn springing from it, and a priest is watering the stalks from a pitcher which he holds in his hand.”² Mr. Frazer gives many other examples in the same place of the identification of Osiris with crops and trees, which I need not mention here in full, as they will doubtless be present to the minds of all who have read his admirable treatise.

A side issue worth noting may here be recorded. Everywhere, I suppose, the ghost is most dreaded, for obvious reasons, during the two or three days immediately after death. But in Jamaica I learned from my negro servants that “duppies” are much less dangerous when once the grass has grown green on the dead man’s grave. From this I would be inclined to suspect that the grass, as it were, absorbs

¹ Loftie, *An Essay of Scarabs*, Introduction, p. vii.

² *The Golden Bough*, vol. i. p. 305.

in its growth the ghost or spirit. We all know that unburied ghosts are peculiarly restless ; can this be one of the reasons ? A handful of earth on top of the corpse is often enough to prevent the ghost from walking. Now I read in Mr. Gregor's interesting collection of Aberdeenshire folk-lore, that a dish with a little mould was placed on the bowels of a corpse, if they showed any signs of swelling, and often a small green turf was cut and placed upon the body ; on which, it is alleged, the swelling immediately disappeared.¹ I incline to believe this was done in order to keep in the ghost, which was figured as trying in this way to escape from the body. For in Jamaica it was not a turf, but seeds of cereals soaked in water, that were placed in a saucer on the corpse, as I can testify from personal observation. Does not this explain the facts mentioned by Mr. Frazer that among the Battas of Sumatra, when a man returns from a dangerous enterprise, grains of rice are scattered upon his head, "to make his soul stay at home ;" that in Java, rice is placed on the head of persons who have escaped a great danger, or

¹ Gregor, *Folk-lore of the North-East of Scotland*, p. 207.

returned home after being given up for lost ; and that in Celebes, a bridegroom's soul being especially liable to fly away at marriage, rice is scattered over him to induce it to stay?¹ I would suggest that there is here a transference of usage ; the people have been accustomed to shut in the ghost of a dead man by means of vegetation, and they expect it to be equally efficacious in the case of a living one. Compare the gardens of Adonis and the soul in a clod in Amboina.² Hence, too, perhaps, the late survival among us of the familiar phrase that "the grass grows green" over the grave of So-and-so. It is now, of course, a mere poetical ornament of speech, but had once, I suspect, a much more practical meaning.

Furthermore, another connection may be shown to exist between plants or trees and ghosts. We know that it is a frequent practice deliberately to put in herbs, shrubs, or trees on the graves of the dead. How far back in history or in savage life this practice may extend I am unfortunately not in a position to state. In Roman Catholic countries, however, the planting of flowers on

¹ Frazer, *The Golden Bough*, vol. i. p. 125.

² Frazer, *ubi supra*, vol. i. p. 140.

the graves of the dead takes place usually on the *jour des morts*, a custom which would seem to argue for it an immense antiquity ; for though it is usual among Catholics to explain the *jour des morts* as a *fête* of comparatively recent origin, definitely introduced by a particular saint at a particular period, its analogy to similar celebrations elsewhere shows that it is really a surviving relic of a very ancient form of Manes-worship. In Algeria, again, I observed, the Arab women went on Fridays to plant flowers on the graves of their immediate dead ; and the same point is noted about the same place by Miss Seguin.¹ The *koubbas*, or little dome-shaped tombs of Mahomedan saints, so common throughout North Africa, are almost always enclosed by a low stone wall, which marks off the *temenos*, and are usually overshadowed by palm-trees deliberately planted there. Sometimes, as in the case of the well-known *bois sacré* at Blidah, a considerable grove surrounds the *koubba*. It is difficult to obtain direct evidence for more savage countries, though I shall be glad if missionaries or others into whose hands this book may happen to fall can give me any information as to whether

¹ *Walks in Algiers*, p. 280.

bushes, flowers, or shrubs are deliberately planted on graves by the savages they have lived amongst. In antiquity at least it is certain that trees were frequently planted around the barrows of the dead, and that leafy branches formed part of the funereal ceremonies. I cannot do better in this respect than quote once more the case of Polydorus:—

“Ergo instauramus Polydoro funus, et ingens
Aggeritur tumulo tellus; stant Manibus aræ,
Cæruleis mæstæ vittis *atraque cupresso*.

Suetonius tells us how the tomb of the divine Augustus was planted; and the care with which he notes the fact seems to argue that some special importance was attached to the ceremony.

All through Southern Europe, indeed, the cypress is the common emblem of the grave and the churchyard, as the yew is in our more northern climates. And this connection brings me more directly into closer contact with our proper subject, the pine-tree of Attis. I think there is evidence that from a very early age evergreens of one sort or another were planted upon barrows. Those who have read *The Golden Bough* will not fail to see the significance of this pregnant association. Evergreens are plants

which retain their vegetation—show the life of their tree-spirit—through the long sleep of winter. The mistletoe, as Mr. Frazer has ably shown, owes its special sanctity to the fact that it holds, as it were, the soul of the tree in itself, while all the branches around it are bare and lifeless. As soon, then, as primitive men had begun definitely to associate the ghost or god with the idea of vegetation, nothing could be more natural for them than to plant such evergreens on graves or barrows. Now all through southern England we find many examples of round barrows planted with Scotch firs. This is the more remarkable, as the Scotch fir is not considered by botanists an indigenous tree to southern Britain; nay, more, Mr. Darwin has shown that it cannot live on open or exposed situations where deer or cattle graze unless it is protected by a fenced enclosure. Sheep and cows and stags nibble it down to the ground in its earliest ages, so that Scotch firs may be found in open spaces on English heaths, showing many annual rings of growth, but eaten close to the soil by the ever-active herbivores.¹ Hence we must conclude (since barrows stand for the most part in ex-

¹ Darwin, *Origin of Species*, p. 56.

tremely open heathy country) that not only were the Scotch firs deliberately planted on the tumuli, but also that they were carefully protected by fences till a relatively late or even historical period. A particularly fine example of a round barrow overgrown with ancient Scotch fir is to be found near St. Martha's Chapel at Guildford. Another, a little less striking, but equally characteristic, stands on the summit of Milton Heath, near Dorking. It is faced on the opposite side of the road by a second and extremely degraded barrow, also marked by a conspicuous clump of pine trees. A group of very ancient and gnarled Scotch firs, known as the Glory, on the hill just behind Dorking to the south, forms another and still more noble example of the same combination. But I need not labour the point. Whoever knows our southern counties knows that barrows and Scotch firs go together almost universally. Indeed, I believe there are no *very* old firs in Surrey, Kent, or Hampshire that do not so stand on antique tumuli.

Now, as these trees are not indigenous to southern England, and as they could only have grown under the protection of a fence, I conclude that the ancestors of the existing firs were planted

there when the barrows were first formed, were long secured from harm by a belief in their sanctity, and have kept up their race ever since, either by seeds or shoots, under cover of the old trees, to the present day. The Scotch fir is in England the sacred tree of the barrows.

Elsewhere, other evergreens are planted over graves. I do not know when the yew first acquired its present funereal significance ; but as it is oftenest found in England in connection with Christian churchyards, and as it is also our one large indigenous conifer, I would venture to suggest that it was probably adopted in early Christian times by way of a compromise. The pine which grew on the barrows of the deified dead would thus, no doubt, have acquired in the eyes of missionaries a heathen significance. But the yew might naturally be employed by early Christian teachers as a symbol of everlasting life, not only because it more nearly resembled the southern cypress, with whose use in a similar way they were familiar, but also because it was free from any superstitious association in the minds of the natives.

In southern Europe, other evergreen trees take the place of the Scotch fir on graves and barrows.

In Provence, where my opportunities of observation have been most frequent, it is the great umbrella pine which oftenest crowns the tumuli of the dead ; though the smaller *Pinus maritima* frequently serves the same function. On the peninsula of Antibes, that loveliest spot on the Riviera, the most sacred site is an old round barrow, still carefully surrounded by a girdling wall, and bearing on its summit an immense evergreen oak, or *chêne vert*, the *Quercus ilex* of botanists. Around this oak, as I learn by inquiry on the spot, the young men and women of the neighbourhood still dance annually.

Outside Europe, I cannot say how far barrows or graves are usually covered with trees, but Mr. William Simpson informs me of at least one striking example among a people with whom ancestor-worship is still the principal cult. The great tumuli of the early Chinese kings near Peking, it seems, are conspicuous from afar by their lofty groves of pine wood.

✓ Have we here, then, I would venture to ask, the origin of the sacred pine tree of Attis? I incline to believe that we have. As the pine-tree is planted upon tumuli in many parts of the world, and is often protected by walls or hedges,

it would seem to be naturally associated with the ghost, and to become, in the expressive phrase used by Mr. Macdonald, the "prayer-tree" of the departed.

This, then, I take it, is the true explanation of the prominent part which the pine tree plays in the myth and ritual of Attis. Nor is it any objection to our view that Attis is also apparently envisaged in an alternative form both as a man or god, and as an embodied corn-spirit. Such frank inconsistencies, which to us would seem fatal to the success of any theory, appear perfectly natural to the easy-going mind of primitive man. To him, the ghost may reasonably appear in any one of many alternative forms. He recognises it equally in the snake that glides from under the stones of the tumulus, in the beast or bird that crosses his path after the offering of prayer to his deified ancestor, in the shadowy form that eludes his prying gaze amid the dense shades of the primæval forest, and in the vague human shape that stands beside him in his dreams, and whispers into his ear uncertain warnings or dim promises for the future. So, too, with plants. From one point of view, Attis is the corn that springs directly from the

dead god's body ; but from another point of view he is the pine tree that grows with waving boughs above the grassy barrow of the self-slain or self-devoted hero. Whatever comes from the dead body, whatever seems to stand in close relation to it, is regarded in the simple philosophy of these *naïf* worshippers as an embodiment or representative of the multiform deity. Thus in the extant descriptions of the ceremonies of the Attis festival, we get traces or glimpses of every one in turn among these alternative conceptions. Attis is first of all envisaged as a human being—a young man who dies a violent death in a particular fashion. This death by self-mutilation seems to point to a further development of the same idea which lies at the bottom of the Kandh practice of buying the victim and paying for him with a price—namely, it implies a certain obvious element of consent and self-sacrifice—a realisation of the principle that “it is expedient that one man should die for the people.” So the West African victims, we are told, went gladly to their doom ; and so, too, in Phœnician and Carthaginian history we often find that in great crises of the state young men of good family volunteered to devote themselves as vic-

tims to Baal on behalf of the fatherland. Once more, after his death, Attis is changed into a pine tree; and his festival is inaugurated by cutting down just such a pine tree in the woods, which is accepted as in a certain sense the embodiment and representative of the dead Attis. But still the human embodiment remains side by side to the end with the vegetable one; for the effigy of a young man is also attached to the middle of the tree, as the young man himself was no doubt attached in still earlier practice. All this is comprehensible enough when we recollect that the original corn and the original pine tree may actually have grown out of the body or barrow of the self-devoted man-god in earlier times, and that the ceremonies described for us by late classical writers represent very mitigated and modified forms of extremely ancient and savage rites.

There is also an interesting transitional stage, it seems to me, between tree-worship pure and simple and its offspring, grove-worship. This transition from the special cult of the single tree to the general cult of the wood or forest, comes about, I take it, through the medium of the *temenos*. And what is the *temenos*? Well,

I think, we get the first clue towards an answer to that question in Mr. William Simpson's brilliant identification of the temple and the tomb, already so well foreshadowed by Mr. Herbert Spencer. For if the temple is only a magnified tomb where offerings on a large scale are habitually made to the sainted ghost or the deified ancestor, then clearly the *temenos* is just the representative of the enclosed space surrounded by a wall about the primitive barrow. In the centre stands the temple—that is to say, the actual tomb itself; all round it stand the sacred trees planted upon or about the holy grave, and regarded as the actual representatives of the deified hero. These trees form, I think, the great link of transition to the sacred grove. For when once people had grown accustomed to the prime idea that certain trees were to be considered as sacred from their close connection with a deified ancestor, it would be but a slight and natural step to regard other trees as sacred because they stood near a holy site, or even to manufacture an artificial sanctity by planting trees about a cenotaph temple. Thus, when Xenophon, for instance, built a temple to Artemis, and planted around it a grove of many

kinds of fruit trees, and placed in it an altar and an image of the goddess, nobody for one moment would pretend to suppose that he erected it over the body of an actual dead Artemis. But the point is, that men would never have begun building temples and consecrating groves at all, if they had not first built houses for the dead god-chief, and planted trees and shrubs and flowers and gardens upon his venerated tumulus. Nay, even the naïve inscription on Xenophon's shrine—"He who lives here and enjoys the fruits of the ground must every year offer the tenth part of the produce to the goddess, and out of the residue keep the temple in repair"—does it not carry us back implicitly, by its wording and its sense, from civilised Hellas to the very earliest level of savage religion?

And this point leads me up to an important qualification. It is not necessarily true—nay, it is demonstrably false—that every individual god was originally a dead man. In late stages of culture, gods are quite unmistakably manufactured out of abstractions, as when the Roman Senate decreed in due form the erection of a temple to the purely factitious goddess Concordia. But nobody could ever have thought of

making Concordia or any other like abstraction into a deity, unless they had been first thoroughly familiarised with the idea of many gods, derived originally from the deified ancestor or chief, and unless also these gods had already been envisaged as "departmental," that is to say, as possessing certain definitely distributed functions and prerogatives over certain particular actions or portions of nature. The possession of such special prerogatives, however, does not in the least militate against the primitive humanity of such departmental gods ; for the Christian saints have often similar prerogatives, and we know with certainty that most at least of the Christian saints were originally ordinary men and women. In other words, after the idea of the god has been thoroughly formed and differentiated from that of the mere ghost, it is easy enough to manufacture new gods *ad libitum* out of any material that happens to come handy. But so far as I am aware, nobody has ever even suggested as yet any conceivable way in which the idea of a god could be formed *ab origine*, except from the magnification of the ancestral ghost, his powers and prerogatives. Still less has anybody ever suggested as yet any conceivable way in

which the habit of worship—a habit that lies, as I believe, at the very root of all religion—could possibly have originated except from the propitiatory offerings of food and drink at the grave of the revered and deeply feared ancestor. To put it briefly, though there are individual gods who need not necessarily once have been individual men, there could be no such thing as the idea of a god except as the reflex of the ghost of man in general.

So, too, with temples. While it is almost certainly true that temples as a whole originate, as Mr. William Simpson has so abundantly proved, from the tomb of the deified chief or hero, it is also undoubtedly true that certain temples exist in later stages of culture which are, to use once more the phrase I employed above, cenotaph shrines. But these cenotaph shrines could never have come into existence at all unless men's minds had already long been habituated to the idea of worship at the actual tomb-shrine. Nobody could ever have invented, all out of his own head, the notion of offering up prayers or food to an empty building, unless he had first been long accustomed to make similar offerings at the grave or barrow of

his deified ancestors or of his deceased chieftain.

It is the same, again, with sacred stones. These, as I have endeavoured to show elsewhere, owe their sanctity at first to the standing-stones erected over the remains and tumuli of the dead. But in course of time prayer offered at the grave comes readily to be regarded as prayer offered to the visible and tangible object then and there present—the stone that crowns and tops the barrow. Ghee or oil poured out for the ghost comes readily to be regarded as offered rather to the stone itself than to the person whose grave it marks and commemorates. Especially will this confusion exist in the mind of the worshipper when the worship is of old date, and the personality of the deceased has been long forgotten. It is very early ancestors who become the great gods of later generations. Still no one could ever have dreamt of offering up food or preferring requests to a lifeless stone, unless he and his predecessors had long been accustomed to look upon similar stones as the dwelling-places of his ancestors. But nowadays, when the sanctity of certain stones is already a well-established article of belief, the people of

southern India—to take a particular instance—artificially manufacture sacred stones by setting them up in their fields, painting them red (a substitute for blood-libations), and pouring offerings of oil or ghee on top of them. That is to say, they treat certain casual stones, which have no rational connection at all with their ancestral spirits, in exactly the same way in which they or their predecessors have been in the habit of treating the graves of their forefathers.

A like evolution has taken place, I believe, in the case of sacred trees and sacred groves. I do not mean for a moment to assert, or even to suggest, that every individual sacred tree grows or ever grew on the grave of a dead person. But I do mean to say that, so far as I can see, the notion of the sanctity of trees or plants could only have arisen in the first place from the reverence paid to trees or plants which actually sprang from the remains of the dead, and so were regarded, like everything else that came out of the tomb, as embodiments or avatars of the dead man's spirit. Once such sanctity came to be generally recognised, however, it could be readily transferred to other conspicuous or remarkable trees, or even to trees in general, and

particularly to the special groves or plantations that surrounded temples, whether mortuary or cenotaphic.

Yet in every case, when we go back far enough in time, or, what comes practically to the same thing, when we go down low enough in culture towards the savage level of primitive man, we find always that we stand nearer face to face with these the earliest naked realities of religion—that the ghost counts for most; that the temple has not progressed beyond the stage of the hut or underground dwelling; that the sacred stone is still the actual tombstone; that the altar is still the actual grave-slab; that the sacred tree is still directly and intimately connected with the ghost or the tumulus. Thus, as Mr. Loftie tells us, it is the earliest Egyptians with whom the divinity of Pharaoh, a god and the son of a god, is most of all a prime article of belief, and with whom the worship of the actual mummy plays the largest part in the religious ideas.¹ Only in later times do the great gods come to usurp the chief importance, and the cult of the family dead falls into a place of secondary considera-

¹ *An Essay of Scarabs*, p. vi.

tion. So, too, it is among Mr Duff Macdonald's Central African savages that the only known gods are the spirits of the dead; it is in very primitive Tana that the one word for a deity is the same that is applied to the corpse of a man. Similarly, Mr. Duff Macdonald has not the slightest hesitation in connecting the "prayer-tree," as he graphically calls it, with the spirit of the dead, or in recognising the worship offered *at* it rather than *to* it as distinctly intended for the deified ancestor. Whenever, in short, we go back far enough, or go down low enough, we always find the self-same result—the gods are nearest ghosts; the temples are nearest tombs; the sacred stones are nearest grave-slabs or menhirs; the sacred trees are closest connected with the original ancestor-worship.

Provided with this universal master-key, then, we can now proceed to unlock many intricate puzzles of tree and plant-worship which have hitherto baffled us. How full of meaning from our present standpoint, for example, is Mr. Turner's statement that at a certain spot in the island of Savaii there was "an old tree inland of the village which was a place of refuge for murderers and other capital offenders. If that tree

was reached by the criminal he was safe, and the avenger of blood could pursue no farther, but wait investigation and trial. It is said that the king of a division of Upolu, called Atua, once lived at that spot. After he died, the house fell into decay; but the tree was fixed on as representing the departed king, and out of respect for his memory it was made the substitute of a living and royal protector."¹ Equally significant in its own way is the same writer's mention of the sweet-scented tree (*Conanga odorata*), which in one place "was supposed to be the habitat of a household god, and anything aromatic or sweet-scented which the family happened to get was presented to it as an offering."² Not less striking is the case of the large tree, *Hernandia peltata*, in which "a family god of the same name" (as the native one of the tree) "was supposed to live; and hence no one dared to pluck a leaf or break a branch." In all these relatively primitive cases it is noticeable that it is a *family god* who is believed to inhabit the tree. We stand as yet quite close to the original form of worship which is almost

¹ Turner, *Samoa*, p. 65.

² *Ibid.*, p. 71.

exclusively domestic and directed straight at the heads of the family ghosts. After all this, it is interesting to read that on the closely related Savage Island the kings—who would of course be the descendants of such divine ancestors, and therefore themselves both gods and priests—“were supposed to cause the food to grow;” and that “the people got angry with them in times of scarcity, and killed them; and as one after another was killed, the end of it was that no one wished to be king.”¹ Readers of *The Golden Bough*, however, will be more likely to suspect that the kings were sacrificed on the same principle as the Rex Nemorensis, and that at last the royal stock got exhausted by too rapid using-up of the whole available supply of divinity. Indeed, the proper keeping-up of the king-god’s family, in cases where godship has to pay for its dignity by the unpleasant incident of final sacrifice, willing or unwilling, must be an endless source of anxiety and trouble to primitive politicians. Where the safety of the crops and of the tribesmen themselves depends entirely upon a single life, a very painful state of tension must often exist, and the authorities must

¹ Turner, *Samoa*, p. 305.

frequently feel the strain imposed upon their consciences harder than they can bear.

One of the most striking pieces of evidence I have been able to obtain, however, is that of the Tanese in the New Hebrides, who, says Mr. Turner, in a passage I have already partly quoted, "have no idols. The banyan tree forms their sacred grove or temple for religious worship. . . . The spirits of their departed ancestors were among their gods. Chiefs who reached an advanced age were after death deified, addressed by name, and prayed to on various occasions. They were supposed especially to preside over the growth of the yams and the different fruit trees. The first fruits were presented to them, and in doing this they laid a little of the fruit on some stone" [query, a grave-stone?] "or shelving branch of the tree, or some more temporary altar of a few rough sticks from the bush, lashed together with strips of bark, in the form of a table with its four feet stuck in the ground. All being quiet, the chief acted as high-priest and prayed aloud thus: 'Compassionate father, here is some food for you; eat it; be kind to us on account of it.' And instead of an amen, all united in a loud shout."¹

¹ *Op. cit.*, p. 319.

Again, it is very noteworthy that the first fruits of crops are habitually offered, not for the most part to tree-spirits or corn-spirits as such, but to the ghosts of ancestors. Of this peculiar rite Mr. Frazer himself has collected abundant instances. Every year the Kochs of Assam, when they gather in their first fruits, offer some to their ancestors, calling them even by name, and clapping their hands to summon them. The people of Kobi and Sariputi, two villages in Ceram, "offer the first-fruits of the paddy in the form of cooked rice to their ancestors as a token of gratitude." The ceremony is called "feeding the dead." In the Teninuber and Timorlaut Islands the first-fruits of the paddy, along with live fowls and pigs, are offered to the *matmate*. Now "the *matmate* are the spirits of their ancestors, which are worshipped as guardian-spirits or household gods. They are supposed to enter the house through an opening in the roof, and to take up their abode temporarily in the skulls, or in images of wood or ivory, in order to partake of the offerings, and to help the family." The Irayas and Catalangans of Luzon, tribes of the Malay stock, but of mixed blood, worship chiefly the souls of their ancestors,

under the name of *anitos*, and offer to them the first-fruits of the harvest. The *anitos* are household deities. Some of them reside in pots in the corners of the houses, a trait which almost recalls to one the story of Isabella and the pot of basil.¹

In Fiji, once more, the first-fruits of the yam harvest are presented to the ancestors in the Nanga or sacred stone enclosure; and no man may taste of the new crop till the presentation has been made, a trait found also among other savages. The yams thus offered are piled up in the enclosure, and no one is allowed to touch them under pain of severe ghostly punishment. A mission teacher told Mr. Fison that when he visited the spot he saw among the weeds that grew there numerous yam vines which had sprung from the piles of decayed offerings—a most suggestive fact in the light of the origin I conjecturally assign to cultivation.²

In all these cases, and many others that might be quoted, it is to ancestral spirits as such that the offering is made. But often our authorities

¹ See, for these and other instances, Frazer, *The Golden Bough*, vol. ii. p. 376, where the original authorities are fully referred to.

² Rev. L. Fison in *Journ. Anthropol. Inst.*, xiv. 27.

mention gods rather than ghosts, though the distinction between the two is probably but a small one. Among the Basutos, for instance, when the corn has been threshed, it is left in a heap on the threshing-floor, and cannot be touched till a religious ceremony has been performed to sain it. The owners bring a new vessel, never used, to the spot, in which they boil a little of the corn as a sacrificial duty. Then they throw a few handfuls on the heap, saying, "Thank you, gods; give us bread to-morrow also." When this has been done, the rest may safely be eaten.¹ Many other cases are recorded by Mr. Frazer in the appendix to *The Golden Bough*. For example, in the island of Tjumba, in the East Indies, a festival is held after harvest, and vessels are filled with rice as a thank-offering to the gods. Then the sacred stone at the foot of a palm tree (a common conjunction of holy objects) is sprinkled with the blood of a sacrificed animal, and rice is laid on the stone for the gods. The Minihassa of Celebes have a festival of "eating the new rice:" fowls and pigs are killed, and some of the flesh, with rice and palm-wine, is set apart for the gods.

¹ Casalis, *The Basutos*, p. 252.

But if any doubt exists that these gifts are in every case thank-offerings to the ghosts or ancestors who caused the crops to grow, it will be removed by the consideration that often the first-fruits are offered not to spirits or gods at all, but to the divine king himself, who is the living representative and earthly counterpart of his deified ancestors.

In Ashantee a harvest festival is held in September when the yams are ripe. During the festival the king eats the new yams, but none of the people may eat them till the close of the festival, which lasts a fortnight. During its continuance the grossest liberty prevails; theft, intrigue, and assault go unpunished, and each sex abandons itself to its passions. The Hovas of Madagascar present the first sheaves of the new grain to the sovereign. The sheaves are carried in procession to the palace from time to time as the grain ripens. So in Burma, when the *pangati* fruits ripen, some of them used to be taken to the king's palace that he might eat of them: no one might partake of them before the king.¹

These cases, with many others of like sort

¹ *The Golden Bough*, vol. ii. p. 374.

which I forbear to quote, strikingly display the exact equivalence of the king, the ghost, and the god in the savage mind ; for we find what is offered here to the living chief is offered there to his dead predecessor, and yonder, again, to the great deity who has grown slowly out of him. The god is the dead king : the king is the living god, and the descendant of gods, his deified ancestors.

Almost equally to the point is a statement of Mr. Macdonald's about the Blantyre negroes. "When there is no rain at the proper season," he says, "there ensues much distress. Famine is dreaded above all other evils. After private offerings have all failed, the chief of the country calls a national meeting for supplication. Much beer is brewed and offered to the spirit. The chief addresses his own god ; he calls on him to look at the sad state of matters for himself, and think on the evils that are impending. He requests him to hold a meeting with all the other gods that have an interest or influence in the matter. . . . After the supplication there is a great dance in honour of the god. The people throw up water towards the heavens as a sign that it is water that is prayed for." [Say

rather, as a sympathetic charm to make the rain follow.] “They also smear their bodies with mud or charcoal to show that they want washing. If rain do not come, they must wash themselves in the rivers or streams. If rain fall, they are soon washed in answer to their prayers. When the good crops follow, they present as a thanksgiving some the first heads of maize and some pumpkins.”¹

This striking passage, remarkable enough in itself, becomes all the more important when we remember who are the gods to whom such prayers are offered and such thanksgivings due. They are, as Mr. Macdonald himself informs us, the deified relatives of the chief. “The chief of a village,” says this acute observer, “has another title to the priesthood. It is his relatives that are the village gods. Every one that lives in the village recognises these gods ; but if any one remove to a new village he changes his gods. He recognises now the gods of his new chief. One wishing to pray to the god (or gods) of any village, naturally desires to have his prayers presented through the village chief, because the latter is nearly related to the village god, and

¹ *Africana*, vol. i. p. 89.

may be expected to be better listened to than a stranger.”¹

Again, “The gods of the natives, then, are nearly as numerous as their dead. It is impossible to worship all; a selection must be made, and, as we have indicated, each worshipper turns most naturally to the spirits of his own departed relatives; but his gods are too many still, and in farther selecting he turns to those that have lived nearest his own time. Thus the chief of a village will not trouble himself about his great-great-grandfather: he will present his offering to his own immediate predecessor, and say, ‘Oh, father, I do not know all your relatives; you know them all; invite them to feast with you.’ The offering is not simply for himself, but for himself and all his relatives.”

Almost equally explicit as to the true nature of primitive ghosts and primitive tree-worship is Sir William Hunter. “A Bengal village,” he says, “has usually its local god, which it adores either in the form of a rude unhewn stone or a stump, or a tree marked with red-lead.” [Probably a substitute for the blood of human victims with which it was once watered.] “Sometimes

¹ *Africana*, vol. i. p. 64.

a lump of clay placed under a tree does duty for a deity ; and the attendant priest, when there is one, generally belongs to one of the half-Hinduised low castes. The rude stone represents the non-Aryan fetish ; and the tree seems to owe its sanctity to the non-Aryan belief that it forms the abode of the ghosts or gods of the village.”¹

Omitting the mere guess-work about the fetish (whatever that may mean), and the gratuitous supposition, hazarded out of deference to the dying or defunct creed of Max-Müllerism, that ancestor-worship must necessarily be a “non-Aryan” feature, this lucid account shows us the cult of the sacred tree in a very simple and early form as mere ordinary worship of the ancestral ghosts in the place where they are believed to make their home, without complications of any sort.

From these naïve and primitive types of sacred tree to the dark groves of cedar or cypress that surrounded the fetish-stone shrines of civilised Hellas is not surely a very far cry. We are already well on the track of the groves of Artemis, well within sight of the “*opaca silvis*

¹ *Imperial Gazetteer of India*, art. “India,” s. v. “Religion.”

redimita loca deæ," where Phrygian votaries worshipped with awful rites the mysterious goddess who rules over Dindima's height. Existing savages or low-caste Orientals thus give us the key-note that enables us to understand these dark places of antique usage and antique superstition.

Even in the midst of our own struggling civilisation we shall not look in vain for obvious traces of this earliest and crudest form of tree-worship, where the ghost itself is actually supposed to inhabit the branches of the sacred pine or the ancestral poplar. "The peasant folk-lore of Europe," says Mr. Tylor, "still knows of willows that bleed and weep and speak when hewn; of the fairy maiden that sits within the fir tree; of that old tree in Rugaard forest that must not be felled, for an elf dwells within; of that old tree on the Heinzenberg near Zell, which uttered its complaint when the woodman cut it down, for in it was Our Lady, whose chapel now stands upon the spot. One may still look on where Franconian damsels go to a tree on St. Thomas's day, knock thrice solemnly, and listen for the indwelling spirit to give answer by raps from within what manner of husbands they are

to have.”¹ These cases fall at once into place if we recollect that elves and fairies are mere minor varieties of ancestral spirits, and that Our Lady often replaces for modern votaries the older and pre-Christian divinities of very ancient origin.

Other instances collected by Mr. Tylor are hardly less obviously explicable on similar principles. Here are a few select cases from savage peoples. The North American Indians of the far west will often hang offerings on trees, “to propitiate the spirits.” Darwin, in the *Voyage of the Beagle*, describes the loud shouts with which the Indians of South America will often greet some sacred tree, standing solitary on some high part of the Pampas, a landmark visible from afar, and therefore, one might almost be inclined to guess from analogy, occupying the summit of some antique barrow.² Libations of spirits and maté were poured into a hole at its foot to gratify the soul of the indwelling deity. So, too, the New Zealanders hang an offering of food on a branch at a landing-place, or throw a bunch of rushes to some remarkable tree as an offering to the spirit that dwells within it. And

¹ *Primitive Culture*, vol. i. p. 221.

² Darwin, *Voyage of the Beagle*, p. 68.

in all such cases we must remember that to the savage mind the word spirit still means what it has half ceased to mean with us through long misuse, the actual ghost or surviving double of a departed tribesman. The divinities of African negroes "may dwell in trees remarkable for size and age," says Mr. Tylor.¹ But then, on the other hand, the trees may have attained that size and age mainly through having been spared on account of their sanctity when any other and less sacred tree would have been ruthlessly cut down. And when we learn that the Congo people put calabashes of palm-wine at the feet of "trees treated as idols," in case they should be thirsty, we can hardly doubt that it is the ghost, not the mere tree, which receives such human attention. Worship, it seems to me, lies at the very root of religion, as distinguished from mere mythology; and the basis or core of worship is surely offering—that is to say, the propitiation of the ghost by just such gifts of food, drink, slaves, or women as the savage would naturally make to a living chief with whom he desired to curry favour.

¹ *Primitive Culture*, vol. i. p. 224, where all the original authorities here quoted are referred to in full.

I do not wish to deny, however, that in later stages of evolution the worship or reverence once paid to the ghost or spirit may come to be envisaged in the minds of devotees as worship or reverence paid to the actual trunk or to some vague sanctity of the surrounding forest. Thus the Yakuts of Siberia hang iron, brass, and shiny trinkets on any very large and conspicuous tree; they sacrifice horses and oxen under its spreading branches, fixing the heads on the boughs; and they chant extemporised songs to the Spirit of the Wood, to whom they dedicate offerings of horse-hair, an emblematic devotion of their most valued possession.¹ Yet even here we see from the essentially religious act of sacrifice that a ghost is supposed to reside in the tree; and it would take a very delicate investigation indeed to show that in any particular case under examination *no* interment ever took place under the sacred tree. For the burden of proof in this instance clearly lies with those who assert the negative. Whenever we see a shaped stone standing at the head of a little mound or diminutive barrow, we naturally infer that a burial has

¹ Tylor, *Primitive Culture*, vol. i. p. 224, quoting Casti  n.

taken place there ; whenever we see a sacred tree, unless grave reason exist to the contrary, we naturally infer a ghost and an interment. For the case stands thus. We know that in many instances savages inter their dead under the shade of great trees. We know that such trees are thereafter often accounted sacred. We know that young shrubs or bushes are frequently planted on graves in all countries. We know that whatever comes up on or out of the grave of a relative is counted as an embodiment or representative of the ghost within it. The presumption is therefore in favour of any particular sacred tree being of funereal origin and significance ; and the *onus* of proving the opposite lies with the person who asserts some more occult and less obvious explanation.

At the same time I don't doubt that by pure association of ideas certain species of trees, having been frequently or habitually planted over the remains of the dead, have come at last in various times and places to possess an immediate and inherent sanctity of their own. The yew has almost reached this stage in northern Europe, as have also the cypress and the cedar around the Mediterranean basin. Conifers and ever-

greens generally seem to enjoy a special sanctity. Attis, we saw, was represented by a pine tree. At Denderah, the tree of Osiris is a conifer, and the coffer containing his body is represented as enclosed within it. A pine cone is often shown on the monuments as offered to Osiris, and a MS. in the Louvre speaks of the cedar as sprung from his body. The sycamore and the tamarisk are also his trees.¹ Still more clearly do we see that a quite personal sanctity attaches to the pipal tree, *Ficus religiosa*, the great object of adoration in many Hindu villages. But in all such instances, the association and the transference are perfectly transparent. And often enough the very language of our informants points the way to the true explanation, as when Sir William Hunter tells us how in the Birbhum district of Bengal an annual pilgrimage is made to a shrine in the jungle, to make offerings of rice and sacrifice animals "to a certain ghost who dwells in a bela tree."² Even where newly grown trees acquire a factitious or artificial sanc-

¹ Frazer, *The Golden Bough*, vol. i. p. 308; see also the numerous passages on Maypoles and May trees at p. 77, *seq.*

² Hunter, *Annals of Rural Bengal*, p. 194.

tity, one can still see through the account some abiding relic of the same antique funereal origin. For instance, we learn that when our old friends the Kandhs settle a new village, a sacred cotton tree must be planted with solemn rites, and beneath it is placed the stone which enshrines and embodies the village deity.¹ Now, what is this stone? Possibly, to be sure, a mere casual boulder, picked out at hap-hazard; but far more probably, as all analogy would show, the holy monolith or headstone of some ancient chief of the parent village. Nothing is more common than for migrating people to carry with them their sacred stones, their country's gods, their lares and penates, their ark, their teraphim; nothing more common than to take up the bones of their Josephs out of Egypt for interment in the new land which their lords and gods give them. In any case, however, be this as it may, the performance under the cotton tree is clearly on the very face of it a mimic interment. Considering what we know in other ways of the Kandhs, it would not surprise one to learn that a guardian deity used once to be provided for the new village by the simple process of slaughtering a

¹ Tylor, *Primitive Culture*, vol. i. p. 225.

superfluous meriah at the stone, exactly as in mediæval Europe, and long before a guardian spirit was provided for a bridge, a town wall, or any other important building, by immuring a human victim alive into the solid masonry—a curious and horrible superstition to which I shall have occasion to recur more fully further on in my argument. At any rate, we see in this Indian custom another exemplification of that deliberate manufacture of village gods or sacred objects of which other instances are abundantly forthcoming elsewhere.¹ Wherever such sacred foundation stones are set up, it is the duty of the village headman to make an offering to them once a year. That ceremony alone would amply suffice to suggest that they are regarded in the same light as the ancestral spirits, and would at least serve to bring up in one's mind the conjectural idea that a human victim or god was originally offered up on the spot where they are planted.

Rome herself had such a sacred foundation

¹ See *Indian Antiquary*, vol. ii. p. 66 ; Biddulph's *Tribes of the Hindoo Koosh*, pp. 105, 107 ; Leslie's *Early Races of Scotland*, vol. ii. p. 497 ; and Gomme's *Village Communities*, p. 218.

tree, the holy fig of Romulus, whose very name connected it at once with the origin of the city ; and so closely was it bound up in the popular mind with the fortunes of the state, that the withering of its trunk was regarded in the light of a public calamity. So, too, to this day, London has still her London Stone, which probably dates back to the earliest ages of the Roman town, or of the little Celtic village that once preceded it. This London Stone was for ages considered as the representative and embodiment of the entire community. Proclamations and other important businesses of state were transacted from its top ; the defendant in trials at the Lord Mayor's court was summoned to attend from London Stone, as though the stone itself spoke with the united voice of the assembled citizens. When Jack Cade forced his way into London in 1450, he first of all proceeded to this sacred relic, and, having struck it with his sword, exclaimed, "Now is Mortimer lord of this city." Of the similar sacred stone at Bovey Tracey in Devonshire, Ormerod tells us that the mayor on the first day of his tenure of office used to ride round it and strike it with a stick. According to the *Totnes Times* of May

13th 1882, the young men of the town were compelled on the same day to kiss the magic stone, and to pledge allegiance in upholding the ancient rights and privileges of Bovey.¹ In these two cases we can clearly observe that stone and tree alike are regarded as the embodiment of the city, town, or village; and, as I believe, they derive their sanctity from the foundation god or spirit, who, as I shall have occasion to show hereafter, was probably killed on the spot, to provide a specific or artificial deity for the new creation. Indeed, I would even venture to ask, is not this the true meaning of the legend of the death of Remus? But perhaps the full force of this suggestion will only become apparent when we come to examine at greater length the nature of immured foundation deities.

Elsewhere we get still clearer evidence that it is the ghost, not the mere tree, to whom the adoration of the worshippers is primarily offered. "A clump of larches on a Siberian steppe," says Mr. Tylor, "is the chosen sanctuary of a Turanian tribe. But beneath it stand gaily

¹ See Gomme, *Village Community*, p. 218; Ormerod, *Archæology of Eastern Dartmoor*, p. 11; and an article on London Stone by myself in *Longman's Magazine*.

decked little idols in warm fur coats, each set up under a great tree, on whose branches hang offerings of reindeer hides and household goods.”¹ Clearly these idols represent the ancestral spirits protected from the rigour of the climate, as in life, by their thick fur coverings, and supplied by their relations with all that is necessary to make existence comfortable for them in the new world they are supposed after death to inhabit.

Even more striking and conclusive, from our present point of view, is another of Mr. Tylor’s well-selected cases. “In Esthonian districts,” he says, “within the present century, the traveller might often see the sacred tree, generally an ancient lime, oak, or ash, standing inviolate in a sheltered spot near the dwelling-house; and old memories are handed down of the time when the first blood of a slaughtered beast was sprinkled on its roots that the cattle might prosper, or when an offering was laid beneath the holy linden, on the stone where the worshipper knelt on his bare knees, moving from east to west and back, which stone he kissed thrice when he had said, ‘Receive the food as an offering!’”² To this

¹ *Primitive Culture*, vol. ii. p. 224.

² *Ibid.*, vol. i. p. 224.

case I say confidently, "Either ancestral spirits or the devil." Within the last two hundred years, indeed, there were old men in Gothland who would still go to pray under a great tree as their forefathers had done in their time before them.

That single sentence of Mr. Duff Macdonald's already quoted, tells us more about the meaning of all these rites than pages of conjectural talk as to indwelling divinities. "It is the great tree at the verandah of the dead man's house," says this acute and original observer, "that is their temple; and if no tree grow there, they erect a little shade, and there perform their simple rites."¹ Mr. Macdonald has lived long among the people whose faith and practice he so clearly describes. He thoroughly understands their ideas and point of view; and I confess I attach a great deal more importance to his trained evidence in such a delicate matter than to a vast amount of uncertain classical argument. Moreover, the Blantyre negroes are still in the most primitive stage of religion; the process of god-making goes on among them to this hour as an everyday occurrence. We catch the phenomenon

¹ *Africana*, vol. i. p. 59.

of the manufacture of deity in the earliest stages of its evolution.

On the whole, then, I think all the evidence is congruous with the theory that tree-worship originated in ancestor-worship or ghost-worship, and with no alternative theory whatsoever. This is the hypothesis that fits all the facts, harmonises all the discrepancies, and reduces to a plain meaning all the seeming absurdities of strange savage creeds and still stranger ceremonies. And to say the truth, no other hypothesis as to the origin of worship has ever been offered. Mr. Spencer's ghost theory, independently arrived at almost simultaneously by Mr. William Simpson, alone gives us a real explanation of the facts under notice. We find ourselves face to face at the outset with the very curious phenomenon of early races who people the whole world with imaginary or non-existent beings of a most shadowy description, and who treat these queer creatures of their own fancy with such respect and tenderness that they actually offer to them food and drink, and all the other things the savage holds most dear, out of pure apparent superabundance of philanthropy. Why on earth should they take the trouble to begin making

presents of food and drink to mere wood-spirits or oreads with whom they had no earthly connection or interest of any sort? Here, as elsewhere, *c'est le premier pas qui coûte*. The offerings made to tree-spirits are precisely the same in kind as the offerings made to dead relations. Dead relations are buried under trees; the nearer we get to primitive customs, the more do we see that the tree-spirit *is* the ghost, and the more does everybody who has anything to do with him recognise and admit the patent fact. It is only when we have moved very far away from primitive usage and primitive modes of thought that we begin to find tree-gods whose ghostliness is uncertain, and tales about their origin in which their former humanity is ignored or forgotten. The lowest savages never seem to harbour the faintest doubt that the gods whom they worship in tree or stone or temple are nothing more or less than their own ghostly ancestors.

Again, all the prerogatives which Mr. Frazer assigns to sacred trees¹ are also prerogatives of the deified ancestor. Thus, trees or tree-spirits are believed to give rain and sunshine. But we saw this was precisely the function of the

¹ *The Golden Bough*, vol. i. p. 66.

ancestral ghosts among Mr. Duff Macdonald's Blantyre negroes, as indeed it is in endless other cases which I need hardly recall to the anthropological reader.¹ Once more, tree-spirits make the crops grow. Of this belief Mr. Frazer gives many interesting examples. Among the Mundaris, "the grove deities are held responsible for the crops, and are especially honoured at all the great agricultural festivals." Swedish peasants stick a leafy branch in each furrow of their corn-fields, believing that this will ensure an abundant crop. Among the tribes of Gilgit in India, the sacred tree is a species of cedar—as usual an evergreen—and at the beginning of sowing, the people mix their seed-corn with sprigs of this holy conifer, and smoke it all above a bonfire of the sacred cedar wood. But all this goes on all fours with the common belief, on which I need not further enlarge, that it is the deified ancestors who make the earth bring forth her increase, and that all crops are the immediate gift of the "compassionate father" to whom the savage prays for the simple boons which make up all his happiness. Furthermore, the tree-spirit causes

¹ See Herbert Spencer, *Principles of Sociology*, vol. i. part i., *passim*.

the herds to multiply, and blesses women with many children. But this is a natural function of the ancestral ghosts, who, as the fathers of the tribe are often—nay, one may even say habitually—envisaged under phallic guises. It is also a well-known function of the sacred stones, which originate in standing-stones or grave-slabs (as I have endeavoured to show elsewhere), and which are universally regarded as of phallic potency. Indeed, to this day barren women in Brittany go to pray at ancient monoliths (thinly Christianised by having a small cross stuck on top) for the birth of children, which, says the Hebrew poet appositely, “are the gift of Jahveh.”¹ Thus every one of the attributes claimed for the tree-spirits turns out on examination to be also an attribute of the ancestral ghost.

There are, I think, three main objects of human worship all the world over. The first is the ghost, or actual soul of the dead man, which gets sublimated or magnified in course of time

¹ Priapus, the garden-god, is a phallic deity: the ark of Khem represents a garden, and Khem himself is always phallic. Fertility, I take it, is the common note of all these conceptions.

into the spirit or shade, and then into the god. The second is the sacred stone. The third is the sacred tree. And these three are one. The ghost is the core and central reality of the whole vast superstructure of faith and practice. The sacred stone derives its sanctity from standing at the head of the dead man's grave. The sacred tree owes its position equally to its identification with the spirit of the chief or father who lies buried beneath it. In the striking and almost prophetic words of a great poet, God is indeed "the shade cast by the soul of man."¹

How easily these three forms of primitive god-head run into one another has already been abundantly pointed out in many departments. The whole of *The Golden Bough* is from one point of view one long exposition of the interchangeability of the man-god and the tree-spirit or corn-spirit—an interchangeability which may surprise us the less when we remember that to this day one half of Christendom confidently identifies its own man-god with a piece of consecrated wheaten wafer. Mr. Frazer shows us how the slain god and the corn or the tree absolutely merge in the minds of their worshippers, so that

¹ Swinburne, *Songs before Sunrise*.

at last it becomes almost impossible to separate them in thought one from the other. I believe the same thing to be true of sacred stones. Men worshipped stones, identified stones with their fathers, talked of themselves as descended from stones, looked upon the stones with affection and reverence, prayed to them, made gifts to them of wine and ghee, of milk and honey, till they almost forgot there was ever any difference at all to speak of between stones and humanity. The Laches, says Piedrahita, "worshipped every stone as a god, as they said that they had all been men." Arriaga tells us the ancient Peruvians paid honour to "very large stones, saying that they were once men." In the American Report of the Bureau of Ethnology for 1880, several stories are told as to the metamorphosis of men into stones from the Iroquois legends. According to Dorman, the Oneidas and Dakotas claim descent from stones, to which they ascribe both sense and animation. What is all this but early men's way of expressing the fact that these stones which they worship represent the ghosts of their deceased ancestors? Sometimes, indeed, we get an interesting connecting link, as in Arriaga's pregnant statement that the Marçayoc or idol

worshipped in Peru as the patron of the village "is sometimes a stone and sometimes a mummy;" in other words, it depended upon circumstances whether the people revered the body itself or the gravestone that covered it.¹ Where many sacred stones exist all round, indeed, marking the graves of the dead, or inhabited by their spirits, it is not surprising that a general feeling of reverence towards all stones should begin to arise—that the stone *per se*, especially if large, odd, or conspicuous, should be credited to some extent with indwelling divinity. Nor is it astonishing that the idea of men being descended from stones or trees should be rife among people who must often in youth have been shown headstones, monoliths, boulders, and cromlechs, or else pines and cedars, and been told that offerings made before them were gifts to their ancestors. In this way we can readily understand the numerous myths of men and women changed to stones or trees—of Niobe and Alcmene, of Daphne and Attis, of the Breton megalithic circles which were once men, of the Samoan gods or ancestral ghosts who "were changed into stones," says Mr. Turner, "and now stand

¹ Arriaga, *Extirpacion de la Idolatria*, p. 89.

up in a rocky part of the lagoon on the north side of Upolu."

And here, too, we get abundant evidence that the sacred stones represent or stand in some definite relation to the dead and their spirits. For instance, among the coast negroes, when a person dies, a stone is taken to a certain house—the village valhalla—to represent his ghost; and among the Bulloms, women "make occasional sacrifices and offerings of rice to the stones which are preserved in memory of the dead." At Tana, in the New Hebrides, Mr. Gray, a missionary, found "a piece of sacred ground, on which were deposited the stones in which they supposed the spirits of their departed relatives to reside;" and Commander Henderson, commenting on a similar case in Vati Island, says, "These were the only form of gods the natives possessed, and into them they supposed the souls of their departed friends and relatives to enter." Some of them "had a small piece chipped out on one side, by means of which the indwelling ghost or spirit was supposed to have ingress or egress." Of a third sort, rudely fashioned by hand, Captain Henderson says acutely, "These, it seemed to me, were the beginnings of a graven image—a

common stone, sacred as the dwelling-place of an ancestral ghost.”¹

And if men become stones, so too do stones give birth to men. We get a classical instance of this in the legend of Deucalion. Beside the road, near the city of the Panopæans, lay the stones out of which Prometheus made men. Manke, the first man in the Mitchell Island, came out of a stone. On Francis Island, says Mr. Turner, “close by the temple there was a seven-feet-long beach sandstone slab erected, before which offerings were laid as the people united for prayer;” and the natives here told him that one of their gods had made stones become men. “In Melanesia,” says Mr. Andrew Lang, “matters are so mixed that it is not easy to decide whether a worshipful stone is the dwelling of a dead man’s soul, or is of spiritual merit in itself, or whether the stone is the spirit’s outward part or organ.” And, indeed, a sort of general confusion between the stone, the tree, the ghost, and the ancestor at last seems to pervade the mind of the savage everywhere.

¹ Letter from Captain Henderson, in Appendix A to Mr. Herbert Spencer’s *Principles of Sociology*, 2nd edition, p. 787.

"The curious anthropomorphic idea of stones being husbands and wives," as Mr. Tylor calls it—an idea familiar to the Fijians as to the Peruvians and Lapps—is surely explicable at once by the existence of head-stones to men and women, and the confusion between the mark and the ghost it commemorates.

I have introduced this question of the sacred stone at so great length, mainly because of the close analogy which subsists between it and the similar question of the sacred tree. For, just in like fashion, Mr. Galton tells us how on one of his South African wanderings he passed "a magnificent tree. It was the parent of all the Damaras. . . . The savages danced round and round it in great delight."¹ But I also wish to point out how the general interchangeability of all the various forms of the ghost extends even to what might seem the impossible cases of the sacred stone and the corn-spirit. At first sight it would almost look as if there could be no conceivable community of any sort between these two very distinct and unlike manifestations of the ancestral ghost or the slain man-god. Yet in Mr. Gregor's *Folk-lore of the North-east of*

¹ Galton, *Narrative of an Explorer*, pp. 188, 204.

Scotland, I find the following very interesting passage, which clearly shows the occasional equivalence of the two ideas. "It was believed by some that a very mysterious animal, which when met with by the reapers among the corn had the appearance of *a grey stone*, but which could change its shape, lived among the corn. When met with, a small quantity of the crop was left standing around it, and the ears of grain only were cut off. This animal looks like the hedgehog."¹ Readers of *The Golden Bough* will be very familiar with this "mysterious animal," which is in point of fact nothing more or less than the corn-spirit itself, hiding, as it were, in its own vegetal embodiment.² The rye-wolf, the harvest-goat, the cock, pig, and horse, are all various avatars of this polymorphic spirit; and now, in the interesting Scotch case above quoted, we find him similarly and unexpectedly equated with a grey stone.

Indeed, it may be noticed very generally that the sacred stone and the sacred tree go together,

¹ Rev. Walter Gregor, *Folk-lore of the North-east of Scotland*, p. 181.

² *The Golden Bough*, vol. i. p. 404, *seqq.*, and vol. ii. pp. 1-67.

and often stand in the closest proximity to one another. We saw in the case of the foundation of a village in India (and probably in Europe) that both took their place in the initiatory ceremony ; and in many cases we find the sacred stone standing under the shadow of the sacred tree. It is so in Asia ; it is so in Africa ; and every here and there elsewhere one gets stray little touches of the self-same connection in such hints as that of the Prussian Slavs, who at the sowing of their winter corn used "to kill a goat, consume its flesh with many superstitious ceremonies, and hang the skin on a high pole, *near an oak and a large stone*. Here it remained till harvest. Then, after a prayer had been offered by a peasant who acted as priest, the young folk joined hands and danced round the oak and pole. Afterwards they scrambled for the bunch of corn, and the priest distributed the herbs with a sparing hand. Then he placed the goat-skin on the large stone, sat down on it, and preached to the people about the history of their forefathers and their old heathen customs and beliefs."¹ Now this curious passage is, as it were, a perfect epitome and brief abstract of

¹ *The Golden Bough*, vol. ii. p. 18.

primitive practice and primitive belief. First of all, there is ancestor-worship, pure and unadulterated. Then there is the sacred stone, and close by its side there is the sacred tree. After these, there is the corn-spirit in his avatar as the goat, replacing the earlier human victim who was at one and the same time god and sacrifice. To my mind, it is impossible to read such a passage as this and not perceive at once the true relation between ancestor-worship, stone-worship, tree-worship, and the cult of the corn-spirit in his various forms as man or animal, pine tree or cedar.

There is one more point of considerable importance to which I wish to call attention in passing, before I quit this part of my subject, and that is the question of the immolation of the man-god as a deliberate mode of producing a corn-spirit or guardian soul of vegetation for the growing crops. Of the practice itself there cannot now remain the slightest doubt after the brilliant demonstration given by Mr. Frazer in his epoch-making work. But it may have seemed a hard saying to some when I attributed these immolations to the definite desire to manufacture artificially an indwelling spirit for the growing

corn. Nevertheless, such definite manufacture would seem much less curious to primitive man than to his modern and more squeamish or humane descendants. We must recollect that the chiefs or kings of primitive peoples, being the offspring of the deified ghosts who form the tribal gods, are therefore necessarily divine. That kings are gods, Mr. Frazer has now abundantly shown us ; and we learnt from Mr. Loftie how the divinity of the Pharaoh formed a prime element in the faith of the Pyramid builders in Egypt. Now, this being so, nothing is more natural, when you want a departmental god for any particular purpose, than to release before its time one of these divine souls from its fleshly tabernacle, and turn it loose upon space to perform whatever work you may happen to require of it. We must remember in this connection that primitive men really *believe* in the world and the life beyond the grave. To them it is all very ordinary reality. Thus, slaves are sacrificed on the tombs of their masters to bear them company in their ghostly life. "The practice of sending messengers to the world beyond the grave," says Mr. Macdonald, "is found on the west coast. A chief summons a slave, delivers

to him a message, and then cuts off his head. If the chief forgets anything that he wanted to say, he sends another slave as a postscript." Nor are all the victims unwilling sufferers. Wives perform suttee of their own accord on the pyres of their husbands; young men offered themselves voluntarily for the fatherland to Baal; Marcus Curtius devoted himself by leaping into the gulf in the forum. Even where the victims had no choice, we saw above that they were well treated, like the meriahs among the Kandhs, or like the Sioux girl sacrificed by the Pawnees, of whom Mr. James expressly tells us that she was kept for six months with care and kindness.¹ Indeed, it is oftenest the king's own son that he devotes as a victim, most probably because he is of royal, that is to say, of divine, blood.²

A curious analogy elsewhere will make this point, I hope, both clearer and more certain. It is a practice with early or undeveloped races to supply an artificial guardian god or spirit for a building, in precisely the same way as I suppose the guardian god or spirit for the growing crops to

¹ *Account of an Expedition to the Rocky Mountains*, vol. ii. p. 80.

² See instances in *The Golden Bough*, vol. i. p. 235.

have been supplied by agriculturists—namely, by killing a human victim, whose blood was sometimes actually used as cement for the walls, so that his ghost might, as it were, be implicitly bound up in the very stones and fabric of the building. There is a legend current in Scotland, says Mr. Tylor,¹ that the Piets bathed their foundation stones with human blood; and St. Columba, not much more advanced in thought than his heathen contemporaries, “found it necessary to bury St. Oran alive beneath the foundation of his monastery.” As the chronicler phrases it, “Columbkille said to his people, ‘It would be well for us that our roots should pass into the earth here.’ And he said to them, ‘It is permitted to you that some one of you go under the earth to consecrate it.’” Oran accepted the sacrifice.² Even in modern Europe, such usages survived late. When the broken dam of the Nogat had to be repaired in 1463, the peasants, being advised to throw in a living man, are said to have made a beggar drunk and utilised him for the purpose. Thuringian legend declares that to make the

¹ *Primitive Culture*, vol. i. p. 104.

² Reeves' *Life of St. Columba*, p. 288.

castle of Liebenstein fast and impregnable, a child was bought for hard money of its mother and walled in. Notice here the analogy to Kandh custom with the meriahs. The child was eating a cake while the masons were at work and it cried out, "Mother, I see thee still;" then after a little time, "Mother, I see thee a little still;" finally, as they put in the last stone, "Mother, now I see thee no more." The wall of Copenhagen, says Mr. Tylor, to whom I am indebted for most of these cases, sank as fast as it was built; so they took an innocent little girl, and set her at a table with toys and eatables; then, while she played and ate, twelve master masons closed a vault over her; and with clanging music the wall was raised, and stood firm ever afterwards. In Italy, again, the bridge of Arta fell in time after time till they walled in the master builder's wife, the last point being a significant detail, which brings us very near to the sacrificial savage pattern. At Scutari, in Servia, once more, the fortress could only be satisfactorily built after a human victim was walled into it; so the three brothers who wrought at it decided to offer up the first of their wives who came to the place to bring them food. And

so too, in Welsh legend, Vortigern could not finish his tower till the foundation stone was wetted with the blood of a child born of a mother without a father—a common trait in the generation of man-gods.

Away from Europe, Mr. Tylor cites many more historical instances of the self-same horrible and superstitious practices. In Galam, in Africa, a boy and girl used to be buried alive before the great gate of the city to make it impregnable; while in Great Bassam and Yarriba such sacrifices were usual at the foundation of a house or village. Clearly, the idea was to supply the site with an artificial tutelary deity; and I would ask, is not this also the rationale of the stone and tree employed, as we saw, to make the local gods of a new settlement? May we not conclude that originally at least such a human sacrifice took place in every case; that the stone and tree had their primitive meaning as marking the place of the ghost or god; and that, as manners grew milder, they remained at last as mere symbols or imitations of the genuine slaughter? For Mr. Tylor speaks of substitutes for the human victim in many places, and these substitutes are all of the familiar kind—a lamb, a live

horse, a cock, an empty coffin. The stone and the tree would answer in many ways the same ceremonial purpose; they would remain as symbols of the ritual sacrifice after the reality itself had faded or even been forgotten.

In Polynesia, where we always stand nearer to the roots and beginning of things, Ellis heard that the central pillar of one of the temples at Maeva was planted upon the body of a human victim. Among the Dyaks of Borneo, a slave girl was crushed to death under the first post of a house. Even in Japan, a couple of centuries since, when a great wall was to be built, "some wretched slave would offer himself as a foundation." Observe here, too, the further important fact that the immolation in this case was apparently quite voluntary. Mr. Tylor, indeed, treats all these instances as though the victim were offered up to appease the earth-demons; but one of his own authorities, Mason, was told by an eye-witness that at the building of the new city of Tavoy in Tennasserim, "a criminal was put in each post-hole to become a protecting demon. Here we have, I think, the more probable explanation, an explanation which exactly accords in every point with the principles and practice

of the Kandhs and the other human-sacrificing savages.

In October 1881, the king of Ashanti put fifty girls to death, that their blood might be mixed with the mud used to repair the royal palace, injured by an earthquake. "Some years ago, the piers of a railway bridge under construction in Central India were twice washed away, when nearly finished, by the floods, and a rumour spread abroad among the Bheels of the neighbouring jungles that one of them was to be seized and sacrificed by the engineers, who had received such manifest proof of mysterious opposition to their work."¹ Schrader says that when the great railway bridge over the Ganges was begun, every mother in India trembled for her child.² Mr. Baring Gould has contributed a striking article on this subject to *Murray's Magazine* for March 1887; and he differs from Mr. Tylor in attributing the practice of immolation (rightly, as I believe) to the desire to produce a protecting spirit for the edifice to be erected.³ Ubicini

¹ Sir A. Lyall, *Asiatic Studies*, p. 19.

² Clodd, *Childhood of Religion*, p. 268.

³ See also Grimm, *Teutonic Mythology*, ii. p. 844, and *Folk-lore Record*, iii. p. 282.

well defines a *stahie* as "the ghost of a person who has been immured in the walls of a building in order to make it more solid."¹

It is not houses alone, however, that are thus protected by an artificially made guardian. The vikings used to "redden their rollers" with human blood. That is to say, when a warship was launched, human victims were bound to the rollers over which the galley was run down to the sea, so that the stem was sprinkled with their blood.² The last trace of such consecration among ourselves is the breaking of a wine-bottle over the ship's bows. Captain Cook found the South Sea Islanders similarly christened their war-canoes with the blood of human victims.

Furthermore, as the position of protecting spirit is rather a dignified and beatified one than otherwise, it is kept reasonably enough in the family of the king, the founder, or the master builder. This is a common trait in all stories of these human sacrifices, and it helps to bring

¹ *Ballades et Chants Populaires de la Roumanie*, p. 198.

² Vigfusson and Powell, *Corpus Poeticum Boreale*, i. 410.

them into line with the similar stories of corn-spirits and self-immolated gods. For it is the dearly beloved son that is especially chosen for such self-immolation. Thus, we read in the Book of Kings that when Hiel the Bethelite built Jericho, "he laid the foundation thereof in Abiram his firstborn, and set up the gates thereof in his youngest son Segub." And may we not put down in the same category the case of Remus, represented in legend as brother of Romulus, the founder of Rome?

At the risk of seeming to descend beneath the dignity of so great a subject, I cannot resist the temptation of quoting from Mr. William Simpson a very good story which well illustrates the survival to the present day of the type of mind that thinks a god or saint far more useful in the other world than in this, and so doesn't scruple to take measures for sending him there. The tale goes that Sir Richard Burton was exploring in some out of the way place in Afghanistan, and had adopted for that purpose the disguise of a Mahommedan fakir, in which alone would he have dared to penetrate so dangerous a region. At one village where he stopped, he played his part so well that the people soon formed a very

high idea of their visitor's sanctity. He was congratulating himself greatly, indeed, on the impression he had produced, when, one night, to his immense surprise, the elders of the village came to him privately and earnestly advised him to go away at once. Burton asked in astonishment whether the people didn't like him; and was answered, oh! yes; that was just the trouble. They were all enchanted with his great holiness; and considering what a splendid thing it would be for their village to possess the zialet or tomb-shrine of so good a man, they were debating among themselves as to whether they would not kill him. This story is in the very spirit of the Kandh theology, and if it isn't true, it is at least very "ben trovato."¹

To sum up, then, I would say in one word, while I accept in all their main results Mr. Frazer's remarkable conclusions, I believe that in order to understand to the very bottom the origin of tree-worship, we must directly affiliate it upon primitive ancestor or ghost-worship, of which it is an aberrant and highly specialised offshoot.

¹ William Simpson, *The Worship of Death*, p. 17, footnote.

EXCURSUS III.

ON THE GALLIAMBIC METRE.

No measure in which any great poet has written has been the subject of so much misconception, I believe, as the metre of the *Attis*. Not only in the minds of casual readers, but even in those of classical scholars, a general impression seems to prevail that the Galliambic verse, as Catullus wrote it, is a rather lawless, irregular, uncertain rhythm, and that any amount of variation from line to line is both tolerated and encouraged. I find this erroneous idea so widespread and so general, even among those whose business it is to instruct youth in such high and abstruse matters, that I think it may be worth while, with very great diffidence, to go into the question once for all, and to show (if I can) that the Galliambic, though a very rapid and hurrying metre, is far more definite, regular, and invariable than either the hexameter or the iambic

senarius. At the same time, I shall endeavour to make it clear that a great deal of misconception has actually existed, even in the ideas of real scholars and real poets, on the subject of this particular measure. I shall try to point out that it has been doubtfully explained by many able commentators, and often incorrectly or inadequately imitated by modern verse-writers.

To begin with, let us clear our heads at once of all preconceptions derived from writers on metrical doctrine, ancient or modern, and inquire for ourselves, *de novo*, with an unprejudiced mind, what is the nature and character of the Galliambic measure as *Catullus wrote it*. After that, we may come back to examine the figments of grammarians, and to see how far, if at all, they accord with the facts and probabilities of the case, as regards Catullus himself and his Greek predecessors.

In the first place, then, the very first line of the *Attis* runs thus—

Super alta vectus Attis celeri rate maria.

Now, if we start clear of any preconception in the matter, we shall naturally read and divide this verse as follows :—

Sǔpěr āl | tă vēc | tūs Āt | tīs || cǎlēri | rāté mǎ | rǎ ;

that is to say, we shall treat it as an essentially iambic-anapaestic rhythm, with resolution of the last foot but one into a tribrach. More definitely we might say, the measure consists of two halves, divided by a caesura ; the first half being composed of an anapaest, two iambs, and a long syllable, while the second consists of an anapaest, a tribrach, and again an iambus. Graphically thus—

uu - | u - | u - | - || uu - | uuu | uu

Now, if we examine all the other lines in the poem, one by one, we shall find that out of a total of ninety-three lines, no less than sixty-eight, or more than two-thirds, absolutely accord with this standard, syllable for syllable. Of the remaining twenty-five, the greater number only differ from it in unimportant and so to speak inevitable ways—that is to say, the variations consist merely of resolutions or compressions of feet of a sort to which all iambic-anapaestic measures are always liable. We will examine them one by one in detail.

The opening anapaest of the first half of the verse is compressed into a spondee in nine lines,

namely, 5, 15, 17, 22, 26, 40, 67, 73, 77, and 86, which run thus—

Dēvōl | vit ile acuto sibi pondere silicis ;
 Sēctām | meam executae, duce me, mihi comites ;
 Ēt cōr | pus evirastis Veneris nimio odio ;
 Tībī | cen ubi canit Phryx curvo grave calamo ;
 Quō nōs | decet citatis celerare tripudiis ;
 Lūstrā | vit aethera album, sola dura, mare ferum ;
 Līnguēndum | ubi esset orto mihi sole cubiculum ;
 Jām jān | dolet quod egi, jān jamque poenitet ;
 Lāevūm | que pecoris hostem stimulans ita loquitur ;
 Vādīt, | fremit, refringit virgulta pede vago.

In three of these lines,

Tībī | cen ubi canit Phryx || cūrvo | grave calamo,
 Vādīt, | fremit, refringit || virgūl | ta pede vago,

and

Jām jān | dolet quod egi, || jān jān | que poenitet,

the opening anapaest of the second half is also compressed into a dactyl ; but this is obviously done for the sake of the fine slow metrical effect, in accordance with the emotion or idea expressed by the lines. In the first of the three cases, the long-drawn syllables admirably represent the grating drawl of the *tibicen*, contrasted with the quick and tripping measure of the next line,

Ubi cāpī | ta Maenades vi jaciunt hederigerae ;

in the second case, the measure expresses the crackling of the brushwood beneath the lion's feet; in the third, the deep spondaic rhythm adds profound effect to the mournful nature of the wild cry of regret for an irrevocable act of fanatical folly. This effect is deliberately still further heightened in the last instance by the rare substitution of an iambus for the regular tribrach in the second foot after the caesura. It is this tribrach, as we shall soon see, that gives the measure as a rule its remarkable rapidity and lilt; and the alteration of so distinctive and peculiar a feature in the metre, we may feel sure, would never be countenanced by so great a master of music in rhythm as Catullus, except for some very good and sufficient reason.

In three other lines, namely, 18, 34, and 83, the opening anapaest of the second half-line is also compressed into a spondee, apparently for the sake of strengthening the effect—adding weight and dignity; thus—

Hilarate herae citatis || ērrōr | ibus animum ;
 Rapidae ducem sequuntur || Gāllāē | properipedem ;
 Rutilam ferox torosa || cērvī | ce quate jubam.

These compressions are of so purely normal a character, that I would beg the reader's pardon

for calling attention to them at all, were it not for the light they incidentally throw upon the very beautiful metrical effects Catullus was able to obtain within such rigid limits by ringing the changes upon so comparatively small a number of possible variations.

Again, in four lines, namely, 23, 48, 63, and 70, the opening anapaest is resolved into four short syllables, always with the object of adding rapidity and a sense of breathless hurry-scurry to the verse.

Ubi cāpī | ta Maenades vi jaciunt hederigerae ;
 Egō mūlī | er, ego adolescens, ego ephebus, ego puer ;
 Ibi mārī | a vasta visens lacrimantibus oculis ;
 Egō vīrī | dis algida Idae nive amicta loca colam ?

In the first of these cases, the marked contrast with the preceding line—one slow and drawling, the other hasty and orgiastic—must have struck the ear of even the most careless reader—

Tibi | cen ubi canit Phryx || cūrvō | grave calamo ;
 Ūbi cāpī | ta Maenades vi || jāciūnt | hederigerae.

These two verses form, perhaps, the very finest example of the adaptation of sound to sense to be found anywhere in the whole range of poetry, ancient or modern.

In one line only is the opening anapaest of the second half similarly resolved into four short syllables, namely, in 91—

Dea, magna dea, Cybelle, || dčá, dčmř | na Dindimi ;

and here, again, the rapidity of the supplicatory emotion sufficiently accounts for the more rapid and gasping run of the measure.

Most of the other variations are more unimportant, and at least equally normal in character. In eight lines, for example, the second foot, which is usually an iambus, has been resolved into a tribrach, namely, in 4, 22, 31, 63, 69, 76, 77, 78, and 91 :

Stimula | tšs řbř | furenti rabie, vagus animis ;
 Tibic | řn řbř | canit Phryx curvo grave calamo ;
 Furibun | dč, řmřl, | anhelans, vaga vadit animam agens ;
 Ego muli | řr řgo řd | olescens, ego ephebus, ego puer ;
 Ego Mae | nšs, řgř | mei pars, ego vir sterilis ero ;
 Ibi junc | řř řřřř | resolvens Cybele leonibus
 Laevum | quě pčř | ris hostem stimulans ita loquitur ;
 Agedum, in | quřt, řgřř, | ferox, i, face ut hunc furor agitet.
 Dea, mag | nš dčá, | Cybelle, dea domina Dindimi.

These very simple and ordinary substitutions hardly call for further comment ; they are in every case due to the desire for a more rapid movement in correspondence with the

feeling of the poet. It may be noticed, too, that in many cases several irregularities occur in a single line, to heighten the effect, as in 63, which begins with the astonishing number of eight short syllables, one after another.

In line 76, on the other hand, the almost invariable tribrach of the second foot after the caesura suffers compression into an iambus, as we already saw was the case in line 73; thus—

Ibi juncta juga resolvens Cybele | lēō | nibus ;
Jam jam dolet quod egi, jam jam | quē poē | nitet.

The classical scholar who does me the honour to peruse these notes, however, has no doubt long been murmuring impatiently to himself, "Well, but the fellow is shirking all the real difficulties and hard places of the metre. How about those awkward lines 18, 54, and 60? He hardly mentions them. And yet they form the actual crux and test of the situation." Quite so. Those lines are among the most corrupt and the most uncertain of the poem; and according to the view we take of the Galliambic metre in its pure form, will be the view we are most likely to adopt in the end as to the proper reading and interpretation of such doubtful

passages. Therefore, it would surely be best to learn what we can directly of our measure first, and then to come back again and see in what way our conclusions affect these more abstruse and difficult problems.

Looking the metre fairly and squarely in the face, then, as Catullus writes it, and neglecting for the present all hearsay evidence, the first thing that strikes a humble inquirer is the fact that this is essentially an iambic-anapaestic rhythm. So far, we have come across nothing but iambs and anapaests, or their common equivalents, spondees and tribrachs, very sparingly varied by the still more rapid and elusive amphibrach. As yet, no trace of any trochaic or dactylic *ictus*, which would clearly interfere with the general iambic ring and swing of the measure—a ring and swing which goes from the short or unemphatic to the long or emphatic syllable. In essence, the verse as we get it in the *Attis* is of iambic or quasi-iambic character.

Again, the variations on this prime model, which we found excellently exemplified for us in the first line, are mostly in the direction of resolutions—that is to say, of still more rapid and hurrying rhythm. Comparatively few of

them consist of compressions, and those few are almost all obviously due to the desire for greater weight in particular circumstances.

Now, if we had only the *Attis* of Catullus before us, and were in no way prejudiced by anybody's statements as to the origin and development of the Galliambic measure, what should we naturally judge it at first sight to be? Why, clearly, we should say, the crude form or origin of this measure is as follows—

υ - | υ - | υ - | - || υ - | υ - | υ υ

In other words, it takes its rise from two iambic dimeters catalectic, the second of which lacks always its last syllable. Or, to put it a trifle less technically, the measure seems to consist of two half-verses, separated by a quite invariable caesura, whereof the first half-verse is made up of three pure iambs and a hypermetrical syllable, always long, while the second half-verse is made up of three pure iambs alone, without the addition of the hypermetrical syllable.

In point of fact, this hypothetical crude form is just the double of our old friend—

θέλω λέγειν Ἀτρείδας,
θέλω δε Κάδμον ᾗδειν,

repeated so as to make a single verse, and with its final syllable cut off in the second half.

Now, how do we get from this crude form to the typical Galliambic, as Catullus writes it? Well, there is a second variety of the same metre, which the same pseud-Anacreon gives us, namely—

Μεσονυκτίοις ποθ' ὥραις
στρέφεται ὄτ' Ἄρκτος ἤδη.

Here, for the sake of greater rapidity of action in the line, we have an anapaest substituted for the opening iambus in each verse. Make the same substitution in our hypothetical crude form of Galliambic, and you get this schema—

υ υ - | υ - | υ - | - || υ υ - | υ - | υ υ

That is almost the Galliambic as we actually find it in our existing *Attis*; and the change from the opening iambus to an opening anapaest is clearly due to the desire for greater rapidity of swing and lilt to suit so quick a style of subject. For the same reason, too, the penultimate foot is almost invariably resolved from an iambus into a tribrach, which is the peculiar feature that gives the *Attis* its very remarkable swiftness and its torrent energy. For the sake

of these tribrachs, it is easy to see, Catullus has invented all those strange and sonorous ἄπαξ λεγόμενά, such as *herifugæ*, *hederigeræ*, *pro-peripedem*, and *nemorivagus*, to which the poem owes so large a share of its peculiar charm and its sweeping effectiveness. With this additional element of rapidity thrown in, our schema now becomes—

υ υ - | υ - | υ - | - || υ υ - | υ υ υ | υ υ

and *this* is the metre as Catullus writes it. Only, still further to increase the hurrying scurrying character of the penultimate tribrach, the last syllable of the verse, common of course by general usage of prosody, is very often allowed to be short, so that the line ends with five unemphatic syllables all in a row, row, row; an effect which, as I need scarcely say, can hardly be imitated or represented in any modern language.

Still, as if to show us what were the real stages by which the fully evolved metre was gradually arrived at, Catullus kindly leaves us a few stray traces of the earlier forms, such as the heavier iambi in the tribrach places of lines 73 and 76. These are precious relics—fossils,

as it were, of an older stage of the metre, embedded in the perfect work of a later character.

Now, why has anybody ever doubted this simple, obvious, and, as it seems to me, perfectly natural derivation of the Galliambic, whose very name proclaims it of iambic stock, from some such early form of iambic measure? There is only one reason to give—one answer to that question. Hephæstion tells us the basis of the Greek Galliambic metre is the “ionic a minore”—the foot, that is to say (υ υ - -), familiar to all of us in the pretty little Horatian lyric—

Miserarum est neque amori dare ludum neque dulci
Mala vino lavere, aut exanimari metuentes, &c.

This is an ionic tetrameter, and in its catalectic form (wanting the last syllable), Hephæstion says it was known as Galliambic. He quotes two examples of the measure, one from the tragic Phrynichus—

τὸ γε μὴν ξείνια δούσαις λόγος, ὥσπερ λέγεται,
ὀλέσαι κάποταμείν ὀξεί' χαλκῷ κεφαλάν,

and the other from his namesake, the comic poet—

ἂ δ' ἀνάγκα 'σθ' ἱερεῦσιν καθαρεύειν φράσμεν,

both of which accord with the following schema :

υ υ - - | υ υ - - | υ υ - - | υ υ -

Hephæstion further informs us that this measure was much used in hymns to the Mother of the Gods; and then he goes on to quote a third example, which bears very little resemblance indeed either to the ionic tetrameter catalectic or to the metre in which the *Attis* is written :—

Γαλλαὶ μητρὸς ὀρείης φαλόθυρσοι δρομάδες,
αἷς ἔντεα παταγεῖται καὶ χάλκεα κρόταλα.

These lines I cannot reduce to any fixed or definite scheme of any sort.

Now, however the Greeks may have written the metre, it is quite clear from examination of the *Attis*, as we find it, that Catullus at least had no such schema as any of these in his mind. There are only three lines in the whole poem which seem in the least, even at first sight, to countenance the common statement that the measure is based upon four ionics a minore, lacking the last syllable, and those are three of the most doubtful and unsatisfactory lines in the entire work, to wit, 18, 54, and 60.

Hilārāte āe | rē cītātis || erroribus animum ;
 Ēt ēarum ōm | nīa ādirēm || furibunda latibula ;
 Abero foro, palæstra, || stādīo ēt gŷm | nasiis ?

These three lines I have therefore left till the very last, in order that we might see for ourselves in full what light they cast upon this final question of the true nature of the Galliambic metre as Catullus wrote it.

As to the first, I have given here the reading which Mr. Ellis adopts in his text ; but in his *Commentary* he says that *eræ* (i.e., *heræ*, to employ the commoner though less correctly Catullian spelling) "is at least equally probable."¹ As Cybele is again called "*hera*" in line 92, I think on the whole it is quite unnecessary to suppose an ionic a minore here. The reading which yields the best sense, and which Mr. Ellis himself admits to be at least equally probable, also keeps up the essentially iambic-anapaestic hilt of the measure, without introducing any hostile and disturbing quasi-trochaic or ionic element. For of course the introduction of an ionic a minore necessitates the placing of a long syllable in place of a short, and a short syllable in place of a long, in what I regard as the second

¹ Ellis, *A Commentary on Catullus*, p. xxxviii.

foot of the verse ; and however we consider it, such a substitution must at least break in with an awkward pull upon the otherwise even quasi-iambic flow of the metre.

As for the second of our three doubtful cases, I will frankly admit that it does look at first sight like a very genuine case of an ionic a minore. But any one who has read the whole poem with careful attention to the metre so far, will almost instinctively read this line when he comes to it thus :—

Ēt ēār | ūm ōm | nŷ' ādī | rēm || fūrībūn | dā lātī | bulā.

Now, I know this is bold ; and I dare say I shall only ensure the compassionate smile of scholars for such a seemingly wild suggestion. But at the same time, it seems to me in my ignorance that non-elision of the *m* and its accompanying vowel would be hardly much more than an agreeable archaism (like *tetulit* and *face*), wholly in accordance with the general spirit and feeling of the poem. It would be kept in countenance (at some distance of time) by the well-known line of Ennius—

Miscent inter sese inimicitiam agitantes ;

or by this of Lucilius,

Bulgam et quidquid habet nummum secum habet ipse;

though I must confess that in both these cases the vowel preceding the *m* is counted long. Even Virgil sometimes disregards the common laws of elision. As to the *i* of *omni*, I should be disposed to look upon it as quasi-consonantal—that is to say, as having the force of *y*, or, to phrase it rather in Latin phonology, of *j*. Still, I allow that this line, if correctly transmitted to us, is a distinct crux, and I don't feel fully satisfied with any explanation. But what can you expect when our whole knowledge of an author depends ultimately on the caprices of a single manuscript? If only we might adopt the suggested reading,

Et earum ut omnia irem furibunda latibula,

all would be well with us.

As to line 60, it is obviously corrupt. The suggested reading *guminasiis*, which is to some extent countenanced by the diversity and uncertainty of the existing manuscripts, and which Ritschel believes to be the form employed by Nævius and Plautus, would at once restore for

us the normal tribrach. This is the reading, too, which commends itself to the soul of L. Müller. Mr. Ellis rejects it, but with a somewhat uncertain note. "It seems doubtful," he says in his *Commentary*, "whether *guminasiis* would have been admitted by Catullus;" and in the notes to his edition of the text he writes, "*nisi potius guminasiis vel dixit vel scripsit Catullus.*" Though I would not have the presumption to dispute such a point with Mr. Ellis, I don't think uncertainties and hesitations of this sort are enough to base a theory of ionic a minore survival upon.

On the whole, then, if a humble outside student dare venture to express an opinion on so abstruse a subject, I should be inclined to say, *first*, that there is no clear trace in the *Attis* of any derivation of the Galliambic metre, as Catullus uses it, from the ionic tetrameter catalectic; *second*, that the theory of such derivation is not based on anything in the poem itself, but on the supposed external evidence of Hephæstion; *third*, that Hephæstion's own account is confused and inconsistent; *fourth*, that he allows so many intrusions of alien feet among the pure ionics as to reduce the ionic a minore theory

itself, to a pure personal figment; and, *fifth*, that his own example of the mixed metre doesn't answer to his description or bear the slightest recognisable resemblance either to an ionic tetrameter or to the Galliambics of Catullus. Furthermore, I don't feel sure that either Hephæstion or Terentianus Maurus had any greater means of forming an opinion on the subject than we ourselves have. For this, after all, is mainly a question not of knowledge but of ear; and grammarians are not at all likely to be born with better ears than other people, whether they lived early or late, and whether they wrote in Greek, Latin, or English.

Until better advised, therefore, I shall still venture deferentially and humbly to believe that Catullus himself at least envisaged the Galliambic metre in his own mind as an essentially iambic rhythm, varied with anapaests in the first foot of either half-line, for rapidity's sake, and with a tribrach in the second foot of the second half for the same reason.

I know of only two modern imitations of the metre of the *Attis* in Latin verse, for a knowledge of both of which I am indebted to Sir Theodore Martin's able and scholarly little book,

The Poems of Catullus. The first of these was composed for the Tercentenary Festival of Trinity College, Cambridge, on the 22nd of December 1846, by Augustus Arthur Vansittart and Charles Brodrick Scott, then scholars, and afterwards fellows of the college; and I will quote a few lines to show the way in which these excellent imitators understood the measure they handle so familiarly.

“ Age, concitate cantus ; age, ludite, bibite ;
 Hodiè procax December venit : improba patrio
 Venit hora more, lætis dolor exulat animis.
 Fugit omnis ægritudo, male sollicita, procul :
 Neque displicet jocari, neque desipere pudet.
 Breve Dî dedere vitæ spatium : nova soboles
 Subit indies priori, cita tempora fugiunt,
 Adolescit usque natus, genitorque minuitur,
 Novaque ordinatur ætas trieteride decimâ :—
 Decima et peragitur ætas hodiè, undecima venit,
 Deciesque decima nostræ celebrabitur hodiè
 Trieteris ædis, ævo neque subripitur honos.”

The entire poem is printed in full by Sir Theodore Martin, and I notice that its authors, who presumably had paid a fair amount of attention to the Catullian prime model, have made every line conform throughout to the iambic-anapaestic schema given above, without a trace of the ionic a minore heresy. Their

verses, that is to say, are all constructed in strict accordance with the general model,

uu - | u - | u - | - || uu - | uuu | uu,

allowing only for the occasional spondees or tribrachs which I have admitted in my analysis as regular variations.

On the other hand, Sir Theodore also prints a translation of "The Assyrian came down like a wolf on the fold," two stanzas of which I shall take the liberty of transferring from his volume to these pages. The poem is from the pen of that excellent and brilliant classical scholar, Dr. Charles Badham.

"Babylonius tyrannus velut in pecora lupus
Tyrio rubore et auro rutilas agit acies:
Procul aura lucet hastis; ita sidera gremio
Galilaicis in oris aqua cærulea geminat.

"Coma ceu virentis anni soboles nemora tegit
Glomeratur agmen ingens, ubi vespere recubat.
Veluti cadentis anni ruit in nemora furor,
Misera strage jacentes sol aspicit oriens."

Now, the advocates of the ionic a minore theory may make what capital they will out of the last line. Dr. Badham evidently put it there as a point of fine scholarship, in order exactly to reproduce the metre as he believed Catullus to have written it. But I would ask

confidently, Does this or any one of the other supposed ionic lines satisfy the ear, breaking in upon the midst of what is otherwise a pure iambic-anapaestic rhythm? For my own part, I say emphatically, No. Every one of these unexpected dissonances pulls me up short with a disagreeable jerk, as against a sudden stone wall. I cannot believe that so great and so musical a poet as Catullus could ever have perpetrated discords which make even an English ear recoil with horror, as from the grating of a slate-pencil upon a slate, or the rubbing of wet cloths over a pane of glass in a window.

Two great English poets of our own day have also given us what apparently purport to be reproductions of the metre of the *Attis*, as far at least as is consistent with the genius and nature of English prosody. The first is Lord Tennyson, in his curious and interesting "Experiment" of *Boadicea*. I take this poem to be an excellent gauge of the amount of misapprehension which exists to this day even in scholarly minds as to the measure of the *Attis*. For fine and dashing and hurrying and eager as are the Laureate's lines, they are not assuredly the Galliambics of Catullus, on any theory of

the metre, ionic or iambic. Indeed, it would be unfair not to add that Lord Tennyson himself does not claim the name for them, and that it is merely by guesswork that I affiliate his experiment upon the Catullian model. I observe, however, that Sir Theodore Martin does the same thing,¹ as does also Mr. George Meredith.² Seeing then that we all three instinctively set down *Boadicea* as an attempt in something supposed to be the Galliambic metre, I think we can hardly all three be mistaken in believing that Lord Tennyson meant at least to reproduce as far as possible the Catullian effects in English verse. Here are the first few lines of this interesting experiment:—

“While about the shores of Mona those Neronian
 legionaries
 Burnt and broke the grove and altar of the Druid
 and Druidess,
 Far in the east, Boädicéa, standing loftily charioted,
 Mad and maddening all that heard her, in her fierce
 volubility,
 Girt by half the tribes of Britain, near the colony
 Cámulodúne,
 Yell'd and shriek'd between her daughters o'er a
 wild confederacy.”

¹ *The Poems of Catullus*, p. 234.

² *Ballads and Poems*, p. 159.

Now, it must be frankly admitted at once that the metre of this beautiful and rushing poem (which, as a work of art, I admire immensely) is not on any hypothesis Galliambic. It has not an iambic-anapaestic ring and swing, nor has it an ionic one. What is it, then? Why, as I read it, simply and undisguisedly trochaic, with just enough tinge of dactylic intermixture to give it something the same air of haste and rush that the tribrachs and anapaests give in their way to the Galliambics of Catullus. The crude form of the measure, I take it, is to be found in the Laureate's own trochaic poem of *Locksley Hall*—

“Comrades, leave me here a little, while as yet 'tis
early morn ;

Leave me here, and when you want me, sound
upon the bugle horn.”

This is simply what, in the technical language of ancient prosody, we should call a trochaic tetrameter catalectic ; and the metre of the *Boadicea* only differs from it in the frequency with which dactyls replace the trochees, especially in the second half of the verse—a peculiarity evidently designed to imitate the effect of the Catullian tribrachs, which, of course, cannot be actually

reproduced in any modern language. The scansion I take to be thus :—

While a | boút the | shóres of | Móna || thóse Ne | rónian |
 légiona | ríes
 Búrnt and | bróke the | gróve and | áltar || óf the |
 Drúid and | Drúid | éss
 Fār in thě | Eást Bő | ādī | cēā, || stānding | lōftilý |
 chārīōt | ēd, &c.

Clearly we have here to deal with an essentially trochaic-dactylic rhythm—which the metre of the *Attis* certainly is not on any theory. How, then, did Lord Tennyson come to choose this modification of the *Locksley Hall* measure as the representative of the Catullian Galliambic in English poetry? In this way, I fancy. He must have been in the habit of reading the *Attis*, as many Englishmen read Latin verse, accentually, thus—

Súper | álta | véctus | Áttis || céle | rí rate | mári | á,
 Phrýgi | úm ne | mús ci | táto || cúpi | dé pede | téti | gít ;

that is to say, in other words, with an accentual trochaic-dactylic swing ; and when he came to imitate the verse in English, he half unconsciously imitated the rhythm with which his ear was familiar, not that which reflection and consideration would have told him was the actual

one employed by his Cisalpine predecessor. Of course I don't for a moment mean to suggest that so deeply read and so excellent a classical scholar as the Laureate fell into the schoolboy error of supposing that the metre of the *Attis* was really trochaic—he would be quite incapable of such a blunder; what I do mean to say is, that he probably reproduced by ear the lilt that was familiar to him, without particularly reflecting whether it was or was not the actual quantitative measure of the original. It is so that almost all so-called English sapphics have been written—needy knife-grinder fashion—by treating the two short syllables after the caesura as a trochee, instead of by treating them as the end of a dactyl whose first syllable precedes the caesura. Yet I confess I almost shrink from putting forward this explanation in the case of the poet who has given us the only perfect quantitative verse in the English language—the grand and sonorous alcaics on Milton.

The other modern imitation to which I referred above is Mr. George Meredith's wonderful poem of *Phaëthôn*, which he distinctly describes as “attempted in the Galliambic measure.” It is a wild and glorious lyrical outburst,

and on the whole it reproduces the feeling of the original rhythm about as well as is possible in any accentual language. Mr. Meredith keeps very close to the schema which I have given above as the typical Galliambic, except that he endeavours to ensure the effect of the unrealisable tribrachs by making the second half-verse consist for the most part of three anapaests, which ring in much the same hurried and eager way as the cumulated short syllables of the Catullian measure. Regarded as a bit of pure metrical reproduction, Mr. Meredith's work seems to me wholly successful, and nearer by far to the Catullian ideal than any other imitation I have hitherto seen. Here are the first few lines (respect for copyright alone prevents me from quoting the whole of it):—

“ At the coming up of Phœbus, the all-luminous
charioteer,
Double-visaged stand the mountains in imperial
multitudes,
And with shadows dappled, men sing to him, Hail,
O Beneficent ;
For they shudder chill, the earth-vales, at his
clouding, shudder to black ;
In the light of him there is music through the
poplar and river-sedge,

Renovation, chirp of brooks, hum of the forest
 —an ocean song ;
 Never pearl from ocean bottoms by the diver
 exultingly,
 In his breathlessness, above thrust, is as earth
 to Helios."

Such torrent music can hardly, perhaps, be reduced to the strict rule of thumb habitual with grammarians ; but this, I take it, is about the crude form of Mr. Meredith's metre :—

Rēnōvā | tiōn, chirp | ōf brōōks, | hūm || ōf thē fō | rēst
 —ān ōc|ēān sōng.
 Īn hīs brēāth | lēssnēss, | ābōve | thrūst, || ĩs ās ēarth | tō
 Hē | hōs.

This is pure unmitigated iambic-anapaestic rhythm ; and any one who takes the trouble to refer to the original poem and read it through from this metrical point of view, will see that every line in it accords in the rough with the general schema here given, though of course it is imbued with all that wealth of variety in uniformity which is the very key-note of Mr. Meredith's lightly zoned and untrammelled muse.

In my own version—to come down to earth from heaven—I have taken the iambic rhythm as a basis ; in some cases I have allowed the

iambus to stand in the first foot of either half, but more generally I have followed Catullus's lead in turning it into an anapaest. In order to keep up the sense of swiftness, however, I have freely introduced anapaests into the other places, especially in the second half; but I have not otherwise attempted to reproduce the effect of the impossible tribrachs. And for all I have done, and all I have left undone, I humbly crave the pardon of those who know better, seeing I have done it all for pure love of our beloved poet, whom others, I know, may understand more critically, but whom no one, I am sure, could love more dearly or admire more devotedly.







NAME OF BORROWER

ET

